THE

PAVILION;

OR,

A MONTH IN BRIGHTON.

A Satirical Novel.

BY

HUMPHREY HEDGEHOG, ESQ.

Author of

"A MONTH IN TOWN," "GENERAL POST BAG, "REJECTED ODES," &c.

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THE PAVILION.

CHAPTER XIV.

*The Prince in his moments of reflection a very different character to what he was in the hours of relaxation—A slight view of him in his former capacity as a thoughtful character—The arrival of Sir Charles and Lord Baron abruptly terminates his abstractive mood, and fills his mind with images of a diametrically opposite description—*Rouge et Noir—*A theoretical harangue upon its promise on the part of Lord Baron falsified by the result of a practical demonstration—His lordship loses a round sum, and goes home in a surfeit—Tunbelly's promised secret.*

BEFORE the arrival of Lord Baron and Sir Charles, the Prince had been seized with a fit of reflection, and what-

ever benefits might be anticipated to the public from the frequent recurrence of fits of this description, it is certain that their immediate effect upon himself was of a nature by no means agreeable to his own feelings, nor to those which were about him.

Hour after hour his advisers were pouring their complaints in his ear of the difficulty which attended the collection of the public revenues. If he took up a newspaper to beguile the tedious moment, some paragraph or intelligence of an obnoxious nature offended his eye; if he ventured out of the path which surrounded his mansion, his course was impeded by countless swarms of the barefooted children of misery. The doors of the Pavilion were beseiged, day after day, by the herds of famishing mendicants, who, as long as they possibly could, rejected the idea of cha-

ritable relief, and endeavoured by industrious exertion to obtain the means of existence; but were ultimately compelled to owe to others the life they could not support, and to pick up the crumbs from the rich man's table.

It was impossible that circumstances of such a combined character of importance should not compel his royal highness, in the midst of enjoyments, sometimes to pause and contemplate the objects and events by which he was surrounded. He must, in truth, have been somewhat more than man, could he have remained unmoved in the centre of a political chaos; could he have heard the loud march of adversity treading down in its progress all the beauties of the land, all its financial fruits, all its moral energies, and yet have remained unscared by the menacing rapidity of its progress.

The prince was scared: he saw the perils by which he was surrounded; and, although his advisers spared no pains to keep his intellectual vision obscured behind those mists of falsehood and intrigue in which they had contrived to envelope it, in spite of their utmost efforts he penetrated the delusion, and determined within himself to embrace the first opportunity to dispel it.

He had just come to this resolution when Lord Baron and the baronet made their appearance; and their entrance instantly dissipated the gloomy clouds of thought which had darkened over his bosom. "Welcome, my Lord and Sir Charles!" cried the prince in a tone of gaiety. "I am glad to see you. On my word I had begun to fancy that you intended to break your engagement."

"Sir," replied the baronet "we might have had the pleasure of seeing your royal highness a quarter of an hour sooner, but for a circumstance which occurred on the road, in which Tunbelly was interested."

"Tunbelly!" echoed the prince, to whose mind the image of the General's fair mistress instantly recurred, accompanied with the idea that the part he himself had taken in the affair with her would be known.

"Yes, I'll tell your royal highness," returned Sir Charles. "As we were in the fields close by the house here, a pretty female figure darted round one of the wings of the building. Away ran the General like a nimble mercury of about nineteen to catch her; she however outran him, and he had just given up the chace, when I stepped forward and volunteered my services in his behalf."

"The devil you did!" muttered the prince, in a voice half audible, yet loud enough to interrupt the baronet for a moment. Then in a more intelligible tone his royal highness continued, "Go on, Sir Charles."

"I offered my services, sir," resumed Sir Charles, "and pushed forward after the unknown, and by the bye she was a beautiful creature, but when I overtook her, she scolded me with such an air of dignity, that, by my sober reason, I believe I should have broken my word with Tunbelly, and have suffered her to escape, but at that moment the General came up.

"Did he?" enquired the prince, whose agitation had become so great as almost to mock the feeble restraint which his royal highness had imposed on it; "And what happened then?"

"She began, sir, to weep and whine so as to make me well nigh do the same," quoth Sir Charles, "and she talked of how she had behaved to him, and a great deal more; and then Tunbelly said—"

"Well, well, and what did Tunbelly say? Did he inquire how she had used him ill? and did she tell him a long story? Come, be quick, baronet! You are so tedious in your statement!"

A less superficial observer than even Sir Charles would at this moment, from the tone and manner of the prince, have decided that he was more than commonly interested in the narrative which he was relating. "I will be brief, your royal highness," returned the baronet, "for, in truth, I have not much more to say. The General, after she had thus reproached herself, merely said, 'Sir Charles, pray be good enough to leave us.'"

"And you did?" said the prince, in a disappointed voice. "Well, I should have been less accommodating. Why, what an incurious fellow you are, Sir Charles, not to make an effort to find out the secret!"

As he said this, the prince seemed suddenly to recollect himself; and, as though he feared he had gone too far, immediately changed the conversation, and proposed that they should sit down to the favourite game of *rouge et noir*: "for, in truth," said his royal highness, "I see much more amusement in that game than in all the games of chance besides. Is not that your opinion of it, baronet?"

"Most certainly, your royal highness," answered Sir Charles. "I esteem it highly; although I have little reason to

do so, for I generally rise from it lighter in my purse by a few hundreds at least."

Lord Baron, who had hitherto sat perfectly silent being called on for his opinion, declared that he was precisely of the same way of thinking as his royal highness; for it was his opinion, in all matters of pleasure there could not be a more exquisite judge than the prince, and he should be proud at all times to fashion the sentiments of his own mind upon such a beautiful and perfect model.

Such a piece of fine-spun flattery as this deserved particular notice; and the prince accordingly replied—"You are a very flatterer, my lord. But, as your lordship likes the game, come here as often as you feel inclined to play it; don't wait for a formal invitation. Let it be understood between us that you are on the

footing of a friend, and are always to consider yourself a welcome inmate here."

Lord Baron was completely beside himself with rapture at the kind condescension of his royal host, who, at that instant, appeared to him the most accomplished and valuable of all mankind. And his lordship's opinion of himself increased in the same proportion as did his opinion of the prince; for self-complacency whispered to him that as the prince was universally accounted a man of most excellent taste in all things, it followed, as a natural consequence, that there must be something of a superior quality in his own composition to merit the notice of such a personage.

His lordship, however, was interrupted in his pleasing train of self-gratulation, by the production of the *rouge et noir*

table, and was therefore compelled to postpone his further thoughts upon the business, until he should return to his residence. and be enabled to enjoy the luxury of such rapturous reflections, without the danger of interruption, or the restraint of curious observers.

For the first half-hour his lordship proved the winner, and was not backward in congratulating himself upon the promise of profit, as well as honour, which he was likely to derive from this engagement. But alas! fortune is inconstant, and scouts to-morrow the very being whom she favoured to-day: an incipient success was all that she allowed him; and, in less than four hours, his lordship had lost, to the prince and Sir Charles, a total sum of not less than twelve thousand pounds; independent of which, he had also lost that grateful feeling of the parti-

cular distinction conferred upon him by this invitation to the Pavilion, and by the condescending manner in which his royal highness had directed him to consider himself on a friendly footing there, which had previously occupied his mind.

"You have been very unfortunate this evening, my lord," said the prince, endeavouring to conceal his exultation for the signal success which had attended his own play, under an affected sympathy in the heavy loss of Lord Baron—"but fortune does not always wear the same face, and be assured you will have more luck another time. What does your lordship say to another stake? Woo the goddess and win her!"

"I'll try once more," replied his lordship; but if I lose then I'll play no more, but forswear cards and give up gaming;

for half-a-dozen such nights as this would make me poorer than a street-scavenger."

"Courage, my boy," cried Sir Charles, slapping him on the back —"Fortune is only trying an experiment on you, to determine by the fortitude with which you can endure adversity, whether or not you are deserving of the smile of prosperity. How many times have I lost a fortune at one throw, and regained it the next—crept home to my residence which I had just lost, with every particle of its contents, to some more fortunate candidate for wealth, and, on the following day, raised a small sum by pawning my linen, staked again, and become, in a few hours, master of mansions, parks, and landed estates! Why a chance in the lottery is nothing, and would be nothing if the prizes were ten times as large, compared to the glittering chances of a

determined and persevering member of the gaming-table."

"Well, well, I'll try again! I'll stake another thousand!" cried Baron, depositing upon the table a note for that sum; but scarcely had he put up his pocket-book before his ears were again paralyzed by an exclamation from the baronet,—"Well, you are cursed unlucky, my lord, and that's the truth! Fortune declares against you once more! but don't be disconcerted; at her again, and again, my boy!"

"I'll play no more," cried Lord Baron, rising from the table in a rage too great for description; "if I do I'll be ———." An oath had nearly escaped him, when a whisper from Sir Charles, "Nay, my dear Baron, remember where you are," recalled him to himself, and checked the

unuttered execration, which a feeling, somewhat between disappointment and despair, had rashly prompted.

For some time, however, his lordship was obstinate in his refusal to stake any more while fortune was in this untoward mood. But the importunities of Sir Charles, whose manner on such occasions was peculiarly fascinating, at length prevailed over the sober dictates of prudence, and he was again drawn into the vortex, from which it was probable he would not escape without injury.

In this manner did the game continue for about an hour longer, his lordship uniformly losing his stake, and becoming at every loss more apparently determined to tempt the fickle goddess no more. His discretion and his determination, however, were too weak to withstand the artful co-

quetry of his antagonists, who were too great adepts in the profession in which they were now engaged, to find any very considerable difficulty in overcoming the trifling and indeterminate objections of so complete a green-horn as the one before them.

Suffice it to say, when his lordship left off, about an hour before midnight, his paternal property, which had only fallen into his possession about ten days before, was not so ample by the value of thirty thousand pounds, as it was before he had suffered himself to be implicated in the gambling transactions of this evening. At the close of the business, the impetuosity of his anger completely overstepped those limits which etiquette had established, and excited him to a vehemence of expression, which neither the established forms of decorum, nor the incessant

twitches and whisperings of Sir Charles, could restrain. It requires, in truth, a mind cast in something superior to the ordinary mould, to play the part of a cool philosopher, under a loss so overwhelming as that which had just fallen upon Lord Baron; and his lordship could put in no reasonable claim to such superiority. He was one of those who are indebted to Heaven for being born rich, or for having greatness thrust upon them; for he was certainly destitute of any power of intellect to achieve greatness. Within himself he had no sources of enjoyment—no remedies for sorrow. If he were pleased, it was at the jokes of another, or at some circumstance in which he himself was merely a subordinate actor. When, therefore, the shaft of misfortune strikes a man of this description, having no buckler to ward it off, nor philosophy to endure its wound, it cannot be wondered at that its

intense smart should destroy his tone of mind.

Under any other circumstances, the prince would have considered the unbounded anger of my Lord Baron as an unpardonable violation of that respect which was due to his own exalted situation; but he was so well pleased with the magnitude of the spoils which he had won this evening, and so possessed with a desire to continue the game, while fortune was so propitious towards him, that he resolved to overlook the temporary madness of the unfortunate peer, and contented himself with desiring Sir Charles, in a whisper, to take him home, and impress upon him the absolute necessity of his coming back to the Pavilion on the following evening to make a suitable apology for his present misconduct, if he expected it to be overlooked.

To this command the baronet lent a ready obedience; and, as it required no very great difficulty to induce his lordship to take his leave of a scene in which he had been such a principal actor and sufferer, Sir Charles soon drew him out of the room, and meeting Tunbelly at the entrance of the Pavilion, he prevailed upon him to lend his assistance to escort Baron home.

At the same time Sir Charles took an opportunity to give the General a brief insight into the circumstances which had just taken place, in order that he might be prepared to second such advice as he himself intended to take the opportunity of offering to the impetuous nobleman; who, instead of growing cooler and more reasonable, grew ten times more loud since he left the palace.

He who undertakes to argue with a man whose passions are in the highest state of inflammation imaginable, especially if the drift of his argument be in direct opposition to that tide of feeling which is in full and impetuous motion at the moment, may be compared with an idiot, who, by the mere force of his own natural breath, tries to repel the storm which buffets him.

So thought Tunbelly when he heard Sir Charles, with the utmost coolness possible, advising Baron not to care a fig for the frown of fortune this evening, but to turn his thoughts to the much more important consideration of the rash manner in which he had conducted himself, at the instant when the sense of his loss had usurped such an improper controul over every other better feeling.

"Look you, Sir Charles," cried the enraged peer.—"Have not I lost thirty thousand pounds?"——"It is most true," returned the baronet. "fortune has jilted you out of so much."—"And how much is that a-year, Sir Charles?" asked his lordship.—"Let me see," replied the baronet. "At simple legal interest, it is fifteen hundred a-year; but there are ways of making it of twice that value."——"Why then," quoth the peer, "how the devil can you persuade me that the loss of so much money is not of greater consequence than the simple circumstance of my being in a passion before the prince?" His royal highness and you together have levied a pretty heavy tax upon my temper; and you should at least allow me the harmless privilege of swearing an oath or two on the subject."

"That's all very true, my lord," said

Tunbelly, who thought it necessary to come in with some assistance to the baronet, as he seemed to be a little hard run. "But you would not surely put fifteen hundred a year, or twice, or thrice that sum, in competition with the favour of the prince? consider your rank and situation in life, my lord! you should set an example to the lower classes."

"All that may seem very well to a man who has lost nothing," replied Baron; "but when I recollect that a week's run of ill luck, such as that which I have experienced to night, would be fatal to my present rank and situation, and reduce me to a level with those lower classes of whom you speak, I have reason to be angry; so that my anger is reasonable, and shall have its way."

"You will think differently to-morrow;

said Sir Charles." I shall call upon you and conduct you to the Pavilion when you are cool, in order that you may in your own proper person make that kind of apology for your hasty conduct, which I am sure your sober reason will instruct you is not only proper, but absolutely necessary, to wipe away the impression it has made."

"What, Sir Charles,"—quoth his lordship, "do you think to catch me at that d—d *rouge et noir* again? You seem to set me down for an incorrigible flat indeed. No, no,—you'll not catch me at the Pavilion again for some time. I have paid pretty handsomely for my introduction there; but I can't afford to be taxed so heavily as often as I want the distinction renewed."

This reply had brought them to the

door of his lordship's residence: and Sir Charles and Tunbelly seeing the inutility of making any further attempts at this moment to work a change in his lordship's opinion, determined to press the argument no further. The baronet, therefore, contented himself with briefly observing, "that, if his lordship had no objection, he would have the pleasure of waiting upon him in the course of the morrow, when he entertained no doubt that he should find him in a fit temper of mind to renew the discussion which they had now no leisure to prolong."

"I shall be most happy to see you, Sir Charles," said his lordship, "and to discuss any subject you please: but you must not expect from such discussion to win me over to accompanying you to the Pavilion. On that subject, my mind is completely made up. If experience wont

operate on me, I must needs be something below the established standard of a common fool."

No sooner had his lordship retired, than Sir Charles, who, ever since he had set eyes upon Tunbelly, had been almost bursting with impatience to learn the sequel of his adventure with the lady, and to obtain the secret which the General had promised to repose in him, immediately accosted him with —"My dear Tunbelly, how did you and that angelic creature settle matters after I left you? On my honor, she's something more than human, to look on her face! I am dying with curiosity to know what you have done to cause her such grief!"

"My dear baronet," said Tunbelly; "I am actually obliged to you for overtaking the gipsey for me; since the inter-

view, I have gained by your means, has been productive of more happiness to me than any other earthly circumstance could have produced. Why, Sir Charles, this angelic creature, that you are in such raptures about, is my own mistress!"

"The devil she is!" exclaimed Sir Charles. "Why what a happy dog you are, General! Why I would give half my fortune to possess such a treasure! But what had you done to cause such a seraph to shed tears? But I beg your pardon, General; some family quarrel, I suppose? Yet, you promised—you know you did, General—that you would let me into a knowledge of the whole secret. I won't ask it, though, if it be any thing very private indeed; although I did not hesitate to make you acquainted with the whole affair between me and Teresa."

"Well, baronet, I'll let you into the

secret, if it will give you any pleasure," replied Tunbelly. "The fact is, Sir Charles, I was a little jealous; and that not without some cause, I assure you. I had obtained a ticket for her for the masquerade; and, under a well-sounding name, had obtained her admittance, when, unfortunately, his royal highness took a fancy to her figure, drew her away from the company, unmasked, and prevailed upon her to do the same. Fearful that she should be detected in her terror, she confessed to the prince her real name and situation; and he prevailed upon her to call on him this morning, when I was purposely desired to leave his royal highness alone for a few hours. As good luck would have it, however, Lady Charlotte required an immediate interview with her father. I ran before her to apprize him of her ladyship's coming, when I was thunderstruck on discovering him with my

own mistress, seated by her side on the sofa. She escaped from me without giving me any explanation of the mystery, which created the most natural and violent suspicions in my mind; and, during the whole day, I had been in search of her in vain, until your aid gained me my object."

"So far so good, General," said the baronet; "but let me hear what passed since. Our master was always a very Jupiter amongst the women; but I hope it has ended to your satisfaction."

"Why, on the whole it has, baronet," returned Tunbelly. "I don't suspect the poor girl of any wish to injure me. As to his royal highness, betwixt you and me, I think his intention was to confer distinction upon me, by sharing my mistress with me; but my entrance prevented him, and

he will not easily find another opportunity; for she is as much indisposed to receive especial marks of his favor as I am; and, as I have taken a private residence for her, I think he will not be able to trace her without a great deal of difficulty."

"I hope not, indeed," answered Sir Charles. "But, I assure you, I am not without my fears; for his royal highness is surrounded by persons who are entirely devoted to his will; and, perhaps, in spite of all your good management, General, it might, after all, be an easy matter to find out where this snug little residence is, where you think your mistress so secure."

"Perhaps so," quoth Tunbelly. "But I'll take pretty prompt measures to remove her further from the reach of danger. Ever since I separated from my wife, this faithful girl has given me com-

forts beyond what I could have anticipated; and, in truth, it would grieve me sorely to part from her on such an account."

Here the conversation broke off; and the General made the best of his way to the beach, to console himself for the various anxieties of the day, in the company of the female who had re-established herself in his confidence by the candid avowal which she had made of all the circumstances which had led to her mysterious appearance at the Pavilion. Sir Charles, on the other hand, returned to his own residence, his heart equally divided between the rapture which he experienced on having made an accession of ten thousand pounds to his fortune, and the delight which arose out of the reflection that all the differences betwixt him and his Teresa had been so happily reconciled—

that he had replaced himself on his former footing in her opinion—and that no new circumstance was likely to occur to interrupt that union which he had now come to a determination to perfect without further delay.

CHAPTER XV.

Tunbelly smells treason, and feels no inconsiderable apprehension for himself—He listens behind a bush, and picks up ample evidence of traitorous designs—His fears increase, but the appearance of aid relieves him, and after obtaining a little additional testimony, with his companions he makes prize of a traitor, and carries him away captive—The Prince's indifference disappoints Tunbelly, who examines his prisoner, and is not treated with that respect to which he conceives himself entitled.

THE beauty of the morning had tempted Tunbelly from his bed at an earlier hour than usual. The sun shone brightly from a sky serene and clear as a July at-

mosphere; and the General, who had occasion to be at the Pavilion to give some orders to a party of his men, sped his way across the fields which encircled the palace, musing, as he walked, of the singular circumstances which had occurred to give such a marked character of the preceding day, and to impress it with an unusual force upon his recollection.

The General had paused near a tuft of shrubs, and was casting a glance round him, when a low voice on the other side of the copse suddenly arrested his attention, and fixed him to the spot. Two or three words of strange import which his ear caught, induced him to keep as snug as possible in order that he might hear more; although his heart more than once misgave him, and he looked with an expression of terror in his glance towards the Pavilion, to measure the distance

there was betwixt him and assistance, in case any event should occur to render it necessary for him to seek it.

"Confound this thick skull!" said the unknown, muttering in a tone which was scarcely intelligible: "I am but a miserable inventor of plots and conspiracies. But it shall do as it is. I will not take the trouble to alter it, whether it succeed or not, of that I am finally determined. Then to kill him! how is that to be done? I must kill him decently! He must die like a prince! Poison! No, poison is not original! The dagger?—aye, that may do better. Drowning would not do at all; and as to hanging, that is a mode in constant practice amongst your ragamuffins."

Here the stranger paused; and Tunbelly, not knowing whither he stood upon head or his heels, began to smell rank

treason. "Zounds!" said he to himself, "this day begins well, and promises to eclipse all the wonders of yesterday. Oh, if I could manage to trap a traitor, and bring him to punishment, at the very moment when he was about to carry his treasonable designs into execution, the prince could no less than make me a full General; nay, I should not think it at all a wonder if he was to present me with the commission of a field marshal."

The sound of the mysterious voice interrupted him at this moment, exclaiming in a louder tone, "To suffer such a wretch to live, would be to violate all the rules of moral justice; and I must be careful if I seek to have my name handed down to posterity, that every thing be projected well before it be completed. I would fain end it without murder, but it must not be! Die he must!"

"Oh, thou bloody-minded rascal! thou worse than a Platagenet!" exclaimed Tunbelly mentally; and crouching down behind the shrubs, that he might listen without any danger of discovery.

"Yes," continued the stranger, "his death is decreed. Hail to this sacred shrubbery, where I first found my plot, and where I have made all my subsequent arrangements to wind it up with *éclat!* Often have I loitered through the groves of Windsor, but I was never able to do any thing which could gain me fame. Fortune is now propitious! It is here I shall atchieve immortality!"

"Heaven and earth," said Tunbelly to himself, "if I could but move off without being overheard, I would alarm every soul in the Pavilion, and have the ruffian murderer in irons before another hour

could pass over my head ! He shall soon have the immortality he is so eager for; and be d——d to him! The incendiary has been prowling about at Windsor too it seems! Lord, what perils and dangers have surrounded our good old king! I'll have him hanged, drawn, and quartered, on his own confession, if there be a statute against treason, or a loyal judge in all the country !"

A pause of some minutes ensued, and Tunbelly would have given much, could he have seen a way to escape to the Pavilion without putting his person in peril. His talk was very much against him in every respect. If he ran away, he was a famous mark for a pistol shot, and he had very little stomach for such a breakfast as a bullet: and as to running away, it was matter of general notoriety, that the greatest exertion he had made for the last

ten years was to run and walk, as he might feel most convenient, one mile and a half in an hour.

While he still remained in doubt what to do, wanting courage to make an exertion to escape, yet having right little inclination to remain, he suddenly espied three persons issuing out of the Pavilion, and coming apparently towards the spot where he stood trembling and expecting the result with the utmost anxiety of mind, for he was most seriously alarmed lest his own safety should be in danger.

Another exclamation from the other side of the shrubs struck him at this instant. "If this plan of mine succeed, there is no greatness to which I may not reasonably aspire. I may be entombed amongst the monarchs in Westminster Abbey. But to whom shall I delegate the honor of

killing the prince? Bentloram or Cassimer? Cassimer shall do the deed!"

"Oho! are you there?" said the General, taking out his pocket-book and pencil. "Very well, Mister Cassimer, I'll take a memorandum of your nic-name, and you shall find it shall but little avail you! Honor indeed! Mister Bushoran, let me write you down for an accomplice: and you may 'write me down an ass' if I am not too cunning for you after all. Oh, how I should like to get hold of my fine fellow's name behind the bush! I'd teach him to go about, lurking in fields and shrubberies to patch up his treasons! Oh, for a life-guardsman or two!"

The individuals whom the General had seen coming out of the palace had now approached within twenty or thirty yards of the spot; and Tunbelly, still afraid to

call out lest he should be pounced upon and put to death before they could come up, endeavoured by signs to make them understand his wish for their assistance. For some time they did not appear to notice him; but at last he succeeded in fixing their attention to his crouching position and his cautious signals, and in the course of a few moments two servants of the household were by the side of the General.

"Here is treason behind this tuft of shrubs!" whispered Tunbelly, putting his lips close to the ear of one of his companions: "Listen for an instant or two, and you will hear the traitor plotting his plots."

The two men, and the third who had heard this, joined the groupe to the great satisfaction of the General, who considered

himself by this time perfectly secure, and became valiant in proportion: they laid themselves down behind the bush, to endeavour to catch a soliloquy, if it were but in a whisper, or a fragment of an exclamation, in order that they might be able to give evidence against the wretch.

They had not long to wait: a sudden rustling convinced them that the traitor was in motion, and probably preparing to depart, and this idea was quickly confirmed by an ejaculation, "Well, I have matured every thing. My plot is complete, and its denouement shall set the town and country on fire. I shall at last grow immortal in despite of fortune, and posterity shall admire me!"

"That's quite enough!" cried Tunbelly in a clear voice "He says his plot is complete, and he'll set the town and

country on fire! Seize him at once, and let us take the bloody-minded rascal to the prince, who will pronounce such a judgment on the traitor, as will put an end to all his foul designs." As he said this, the General, full of valour, ran from his hiding place, followed by his three auxiliaries; who at the command of Tunbelly sprang upon their victim, a tall thin figure of a man, who appeared like the "skeleton of a starved pilchard," and whose habit corroborated the tale of poverty which his countenance told; for his pantaloons, which had once been fashionable in their appearance, were so patched and darned, and metamorphosed both in colour and in shape by the attacks of time, and the scarcely less ruinous assaults of some house wife's needle, that one might scarcely venture to assert what they had been in better days.

His coat also displayed gaping fissures, through which were discernible the coat of skin with which nature had, at the first, endowed him; for shirt he seemed to have none, or only such fragment of one as was insufficient to cover his nakedness. A small hat of many shapes, and of a russet hue, surmounted a head of hair, for which he seemed to entertain a profound reverence, preserving it in a state of indolence, and suffering nothing to disturb its repose; for it was evident that neither scissors nor comb had separated its tresses for many a-day; and there was a tail depending from the very summit, and reaching half way to his loins, while the other extremity of his person was finished off by a pair of shoes, made for some person of longer dimensions of foot, and in which his toes found as much space to revel as a tooth-pick would find in a hair trunk. His visage was, moreover, long and thin,

and his cheek-bones seemed to have entered into a conspiracy to conceal both his nose and his eyes.

Such was the man upon whom the vigilant agents and friends of the prince pounced; and Tunbelly had no sooner taken measure of his face and figure by a scrutinizing glance, than he swore there was treason written in every feature, and in every article of his dress; and that he was of the very worst species of traitors —one of the ragged ragamuffin traitors, who are desperate beyond measure.

The poor prisoner was so overwhelmed with astonishment and terror at the strangeness of the adventure which had thus suddenly befallen him, that he lost for some time the power of utterance, as well as of resistance; and when he did recover his voice, it was merely to stam-

mer, in almost inaudible and unintelligible accents,—"Gracious Heaven! what have I done? of what is it, gentlemen, you accuse me?"

"You shall hear all in good time, my fine fellow!" replied Tunbelly. "Seize his papers! Be sure you take care of them! And search his pockets; for I dare say the villain has pistols, and pick-locks, and air-guns, or some other dismal weapons about him! We'll pretty soon cut short your career, you treasonable rascal! What, you thought to hatch your plots quite securely behind the bush, eh?"

"Treasonable rascal and plots!" echoed the stranger, who now began to recover himself from the first effects of his consternation, and to see the drift of those who had taken him into custody,—"Why, my good sir, and you, my honest fellows,

is it possible that you can take me for a traitor? Me, who for the last ten years have been constantly lauding the praises of the prince and his wise ministers?"

"No, no, that won't do, neither, my buck!" answered Tunbelly;—"What, do you take us all for fools? If you have been praising the prince and his ministers all that time, is it likely you would have been in this pretty dress, without an atom of clothes about you which a Jew would not be ashamed to put into his bag? No, no, they would have given you something to cover you, that you might not disgrace your cause."

"By the power that made me!" cried the stranger, "I can prove every tittle I advance. I have written in their favor, when there could scarcely be found another pen in the kingdom to do it! I have

pursued them in town and country, at the great cost both of my pocket and my conscience! I have represented all that to them; and all the offers I have refused, if I would turn against them; I have told them of my distresses—distresses which would make humanity shudder and bleed, if I did but recite them; of days passed without food, and nights without a pillow on which to rest my head: and I have repeatedly intreated the smallest visitation of benevolence to save a child of genius from destruction! But my applications, though answered fairly, have produced me no relief; these are not times when starving talent can successfully appeal to the generosity of power."

"That is all very fine talking, indeed!" quoth Tunbelly; "but it is the fashion amongst you ragamuffins to lay all your troubles at the door of the Government.

When I asked an impudent varlet the other day what he had to allege against the prince and his ministers, the knave told me he wanted a change of weather, for, through some mismanagement, there had been so much rain that the harvest was, in many places, spoiled.—"But," says I, "my honest fellow, can the Government remedy this?"—"Yes," says he, "there would be an end of all these things at once, and every thing would look smooth and prosperous, if they would but listen to the voice of the people, and bring about a reform in parliament!!"—And, when I laughed at him, the varlet told me he was an independent Englishman, and for a couple of straws would knock me down. —I tell you, you are a set of miscreants altogether! And every one of you has some fine story trumped up about your distresses! But bring him along, let us see how our royal master will listen to his tales!"

Saying this, Tunbelly stepped forward, with a little more than his accustomed celerity, to prepare his royal highness for the strange visitor they were hurrying to the Pavilion. The prince was not yet stirring; but, as Tunbelly was bursting with the importance of the business he had to communicate, he waved all conciliations of etiquette, and, *sans ceremonie*, introduced himself into his master's bed-room.

"How now, General," quoth the Prince. "What has happened to bring you into my room at this unusual hour of the morning? I hope nothing unpleasant has occurred to cause this unexpected visit!"

"I beseech you to rise immediately," replied Tunbelly.—"We have caught a traitorous scoundrel lurking about the fields, and plotting against your royal

highness's life. We heard him impudently declare his intention to murder you, at least to fix upon one who was to have the honour of doing it! It is all true, your royal highness; and I have got the name of the fellow fixed on to do the bloody deed!"

"Indeed! and who is he, General?" asked the Prince, who was naturally enough alarmed at the air of confidence and the tone of decision with which Tunbelly delivered the mysterious communication.

"I never heard of the fellow before!" returned the General, taking out his pocket-book,—"but I'll swear to the name, for I took it down as he spoke it. It is one Mister Cassimer; a ragamuffin rascal like himself, I'll be bound for him: and here is his accomplice, one Benhoran! Does not your royal highness see the depth

of this rascal, how he has nicknamed his companions, in order that we might not trace them?"

His royal highness returned no answer for some minutes; but determined to unravel, as far as conjecture could avail him, the apparent mystery of the circumstance. He did not give full credence to all Tunbelly's story; and the singular names which he had mentioned rather struck the belief of the Prince, when he inclined to think there might be a conspiracy against himself. There was something in the apprehension of the man which militated against such an idea; for if he had serious views of a treasonable nature, he must be nothing better than a maniac to come directly under the walls of the palace to mature his schemes; and even then, in the very mouth of danger, to indulge in these unguarded bursts of expression which led

to his detection. When his royal highness had analyzed these circumstances in the crucible of reason, he could not satisfy his own mind that the transaction contained any ingredients of a mischievous complection. The man was probably some madman who had given the slip to his keepers.

" Go," said his royal highness, " go, Tunbelly, and take care of the poor fellow: but be cautious not to use him roughly; for I have a shrewd suspicion that the treason is nothing more than the offspring of your heated imagination. However, I will get up and talk to the man myself, and I may then be able to form a more conclusive opinion on the subject; for now I must needs confess I am completely in the dark."

Tunbelly was not a little astonished at

the careless manner in which the Prince seemed disposed to treat an affair which appeared to him to be of surprising importance. He could not entertain such a mean opinion of his own penetration and sagacity as to suppose it possible he had been deceived. The expressions of the stranger were plain enough, and could have but one meaning, if he understood any thing of the construction of language. He could therefore only account for the indifference of his royal master on the ground that he himself had not been sufficiently explicit in his communication, a defect which would very soon be supplied.

"No, no," said the General to himself, as he walked down stairs, "I am not such a fool, but I know what is treason when I hear it. I'll venture my life upon it, and that to me is a thing beyond all value that this knave turns out to be as errant a

traitor as ever stepped into a pair of shoes;—aye, and that before an hour has passed over our heads, that his royal highness is convinced so too. Why I looked at the fellow's papers, and they are all full of seditious marks, legs and tails of letters, and strokes and curves and circles and dots and the like! They are all as full of treason as an egg is of meat. When the prince comes to see the papers, if he had any doubts before, they will all be removed in a minute, and his royal highness will see ample room to applaud my sagacity, and to reward me for my attachment to him, and my promptitude, which has saved his life."

Thus did the General talk himself into an excellent opinion of his own abilities, and having reached the room whither the servants had conducted their prisoner, he found the man guarded by half a dozen foot-

men and pages; for the very idea of a traitor struck such a dread throughout the whole of the household, that they would have considered a less number than those who were deputed to the task insufficient to guard the rascal.

The General seating himself in an elbow chair, began to investigate the servants as to what they had heard; in order that they might rehearse their parts before the prince himself, should he proceed to the examination. "What did you hear the prisoner say, Edward?" asked Tunbelly, taking out his pocket book, in order to make a memorandum of the answer of the servants, and adding, "Speak now, as if you were put upon your oath."

"Please your honor, General," quoth Edward, "I heard him say his plot was complete, and that he would burn down

all the town and the country—meaning the tower and the bank and prisons, and all the ricks and barns!"

"Never you mind his meaning, Edward" returned Turnbelly; "leave that for me and your master to find out; although you are a fellow of sagacity, for you have hit pretty near the truth on't, I can assure you."

"Yes, your honor, leave me to do that," answered Edward. "This is not the first time, your honor, that I have had to do with traitors. This is a deep dog, your honor, but I hope your honor will be the means of hanging him!"

"Hanging me, villain!" cried the stranger, who till now, had not said a word since he had been brought into the palace; "for what am I to be hanged?

Because fortune has always frowned on me? Is this to be the grateful esteem made to me for all my devotion to the service of the government? Where is your evidence against me? Produce one man, one fact, which will speak me a traitor, and then let me hang!"

"Aye, aye, you need not be in such hurry to be hanged," replied Tunbelly. "That time will come sooner than you dream of, or else say I am no General. As to persons and facts, knave, we have quite enough Here are men who will swear to your words, and here are your papers full of treasonable marks! And did'nt I hear you mention the name of the villain you pitched upon to commit the horrid deed of murder?"

"Murder!" ejaculated the prisoner; "Merciful heaven! am I accused of a de-

sign to murder! I who was never an enemy to man, woman, or child—save myself! I, who always shuddered at the bare mention of an act of cruelty! I to be accused of murder, or of wishing to murder. I, who more than once have ventured my own life to save that of a fellow creature! Pray, sir, where is my accuser, and whom have I pitched upon?"

"All that you shall know in very good time, fellow!" replied the General.—"Don't think to entrap me with your questions! I am not so young as you take me to be! I am a man of superior sagacity and ability; and am not to be drawn into a conversation which may tend to defeat the ends of justice. Presently, knave, you shall hear all about it, when his royal highness comes to examine you."

"Will his royal highness examine me?"

asked the stranger in a tone of eagerness, and immediately adding "Then I am secure. The prince has had an enlightened understanding, and to him I will explain myself, as to how I came in the situation where I was seized. Yes, yes, if the prince be my judge, I have no longer any fears! Ask me no more questions, for I will answer none but those of the prince himself!"

"Tunbelly considered that this speech was a reflection upon his understanding, and the bare suspicion cased his heart in iron, and shut out every ray of pity in behalf of the prisoner. "You need not carry yourself so high, nor speak in such haughty language to your superiors!" exclaimed the General.—"It may turn out to your own disadvantage; for I am one of the most particular friends of his royal highness, and it would give me no sur-

prise at all if he were to depute me to act in his place, to examine you upon your crime, and to determine, my good fellow, what is to be done with you."

"Ah!" sighed the stranger, "it is to such *particular friends*, I fear, that the prince has to owe the unpopularity into which he has of late fallen. I know his royal highness to be naturally amiable, prudent, benevolent; a friend to the distressed, an enemy to every kind of oppression. I know him to be formed to command the admiration, and the affections of all men. If he have not done this, I am sure the fault is not his own, but should be attributed to those who have only an eye to their own ambitious views; and who, for the attainment of them, would sacrifice, without respect, every nobler consideration."

"More treason!" cried Tunbelly.—"Attend, all of you! He said the prince was unpopular! That is the very highest of all high treason! And as for his praise—why it is all a mere salve—nothing but a sort of wipe-off! But I am not to be deceived. No, no; I can see the difference between that which is intended in earnest, and the flimsy texture of hypocrisy! You can't impose upon me!"

"I scorn every kind of imposition," replied the prisoner; "but you give a very complete proof of your deficiency of penetration, when you impute to me an intention to commit a crime, the very contemplation of which makes me shudder. Your sagacity is very confined, if you suppose that you have rendered his royal highness or yourself any service by laying hold upon me."

"No reflections upon my sagacity, if you please," returned Tunbelly, "but prepare all you can to meet the examination which is about to take place; for, I mistake much, if you won't have occasion for all you possess. I shall go and see if his royal highness will hold a private investigation; or whether he will postpone any examination, until he can call in his advisers to assist him."

Saying this, the General left the room, not so much with a view to seek the prince, as to get out of the company of a man who appeared to entertain so little respect for him, and who had the audacity to call in question the extent of his talents; a circumstance which, in his opinion, stamped the fellow at once the most consummate of all traitors.

CHAPTER XVI.

The sequel of the story of the traitor taken in the fields—The prince expresses his belief that, if the man had any designs of a treasonable nature, they were the effects of madness—Tunbelly's confidence in his own sagacity and penetration—A brief examination which ended to the confusion of all Tunbelly's hopes and schemes—The final acquittal of the supposed culprit, and the prince's order that he should be entertained kindly for the rest of the day—Tunbelly, although sore at the moment, ultimately surrenders his prejudices, and is reconciled to the stranger.

THE prince had entered his breakfast-room some minutes before Tunbelly arrived, and had been turning over in his mind again those circumstances connect-

ed with the apprehension of the stranger, upon which Tunbelly laid so much stress as clearly indicative of some designs of a traitorous nature: and the more he considered them, the more did he feel convinced that the accusation which had been brought against the prisoner was either charged with a great deal of superfluous matter for which he was indebted to the exuberant imagination of Tunbelly, or, that the individual himself was under the influence of that insanity which was so unequivocally demonstrated in the whole of his conduct as it had been represented.

With this impression upon his mind, hi royal highness was but little disposed to lend an implicit credit to the exaggerated description of the General; who at this moment, entered foaming with prodigious fury, against the graceless varlet who had

expressed himself irreverently with regard to his sagacity and penetration, and for which act of irreverence the General, had the power been within his grasp, would have inflicted as severe a punishment upon the culprit, as any penalty which ever was attached to the offence of high treason.

"Would your royal highness wish to examine this traitor yourself?" asked Tunbelly:—"Or shall I summon such of your royal highness's advisers as are upon the spot, to assist in this very important investigation? Like all other scoundrels in a similar predicament, the fellow begins to be prodigiously insolent, and invents monstrous tales to clear himself."

"The only advices I want," replied the prince, smiling at the earnestness of the General, "are two or three stout domestics

to keep the man from committing any acts of violence; for, instead of considering the poor fellow a traitor as you do, I look upon him to be merely an unfortunate maniac, who has taken French leave of those who were set over him."

"Why he is as reasonable as I am, your royal highness," answered the General, "when he chooses to be so! You may depend upon it, sir, he has got his wits in his own possession: although one may naturally suppose him a madman, for plotting and conspiring to take away the life of so amiable and illustrious a prince as your royal highness. But he is no more mad than I am."

"Well, bring him in—bring him in; and I'll ask him two or three questions," replied his royal highness! and away post-

ed the General to execute the command of the prince.

Had it not been that Tunbelly wished the prince to be convinced by the evidence of his own eyes and ears that he had entrapped an arrant traitor in the very act of maturing the foulest designs against his person and government, he would have been well pleased to have the examination of the culprit delegated to himself: in order that he might have had the opportunity to inflict punishment upon the prisoner for the independence of manner and of speech which he had displayed ever since his apprehension. His great object however was to convince his royal master that he was not so easily deceived as his royal highness appeared to imagine; and was not so blind as to mistake a maniac for a traitor.

In a few moments the prisoner was introduced into the breakfast-room, preceded by Tunbelly, and surrounded by a strong guard of pages and footmen, sufficient to eat him up, in case he manifested any symptoms of outrageous disloyalty, or dared to make any attempt to disturb the peace, or injure the person of his royal highness.

The very sight of the stranger's figure corroborated the opinion which the prince had already formed, and convinced him that the prisoner was any thing rather than a plotter against the government. It was necessary, however, to ask a few questions, and to make a kind of shew of an examination, although he did not entertain a moment's doubt as to the issue of it. His royal highness accordingly accosted Tunbelly with—"So, General,

this is the man whom you accuse of an intention to take away my life, is it?"

"Yes, your royal highness," answered Tunbelly, "this is the traitor: and as irreverent a knave he is as ever was hanged at Tyburn or the Old Bailey—a desperate dog I assure you, sir!"

"The charge you bring against him, General, is most serious," said the prince. "Are you prepared to substantiate it? What are your proofs, General, and where are they?"

Upon this the General took a bundle of papers from his pocket, and presenting them to the prince, replied,—"There, your royal highness, there are manuscripts in cipher, which is strong proof of treason, before you make them out; since

honest and well meaning men have no occasion to disguise their sentiments in this manner."

"That is a very strong testimony indeed, General," replied the prince—"but have you nothing to support this suspicious appearance? Have you any witnesses to produce?"

"Oh yes, your royal highness!" answered the General eagerly, "I myself heard him nominate the villain who was to murder your royal highness! and three of your domestics are ready to prove his treasonable declaration in their hearing, that his plot was all complete, and that he would burn down the whole of the town and country."

So saying, the General produced the three servants who had heard the last ex-

pression who without hesitation confirmed the general's statement.

"Well," said the prince, "and who is the person whom the prisoner has pitched upon to commit the deed of assassination? You say you have heard the prisoner name him, Tunbelly?"

The pocket-book of the General was once more produced; for his memory generally turned tail upon him, when he wished to tax it more heavily than usual. "Yes, your royal highness," said he, "I will soon satisfy you upon this point. The scoundrel named a traitor called Mr. Cassimir to be the murderer, and another fellow, Benhoran, to help him."

The prince, who could scarcely preserve his gravity when he heard these outlandish names, after he had mastered

his inclination to smile, addressing himself to the prisoner, enquired whether it was true, that he had entertained designs of such an abominable nature; and if so, what motive could induce him to contemplate the crime.

The prisoner, bowing himself respectfully, replied without hesitation,—"Had I entertained a design of such a treasonable complexion, I should indeed have merited the severest visitation of offended justice. But, although I have found it impossible to convince this gentleman of my innocence, I intreat your royal highness to mark how a plain unvarnished tale will set him down; and at the same time will satisfy your royal highness that I never entertained designs such as have been imputed to me."

If Tunbelly was angry before at the

irreverent manner in which the prisoner had spoken of him, his anger was now most prodigiously increased; and indeed his rage became so impetuous, that he would certainly have suffered it to break out beyond the bounds of decorum, had not a timely and expressive glance from his royal highness, checked its intemperance.

"Gracious prince," continued the prisoner,—"I am a man who has had to contend with the frowns of fortune, during a long series of years: and it has been with the utmost difficulty that the labours of my pen, for I am an author, have produced me a sufficiency of food and clothing, to feed and cover this emaciated body. With regard to my attachment to your royal highness, I shall easily be able to convince my prince, that it is neither of recent date, nor equivocal in

its nature. All my writings, and they are as well known at the shops of the cheesemonger and the chandler as they are amongst the booksellers, have breathed the very quintessence of loyalty; and never did I utter a disrespectful word of your royal highness."—

"O thou lying varlet!" cried Tunbelly, whose patience would hold out no longer;—"Did not I hear thee disputing with thyself whether his royal highness should be dispatched by poison or the dagger? Did not I hear thee vowing that thou hadst often plotted before, but never to any purpose, but that this would succeed, and that Cassimir should do the murder?

"Have patience, Tunbelly," cried the prince;—"your impetuosity gets the better of your prudence. Let the man

alone to speak for himself, I dare say he will explain all presently."

Tunbelly bowed acquiescence, and the prisoner resumed his tale—" It is true, your royal highnes, that I was concerting with myself the murder of a prince; but it was a sovereign of my own creation: and, if I am to be convicted for the crime of treason for every monarch of this description whom I have planned to overthrow, and have put to death, had I as many heads as Briareus, they would be insufficient to pay the penalty which the law assigns for each offence. But allow me to inform your royal highness, that at the moment when this gentleman and his companions rushed in upon me, I was engaged in the composition of an oriental epilogue, upon which I have built great hopes of profit and distinction. As to the murder, and Cassimir, and Benhoran,

and the various other matters which this gentleman overheard, they are merely persons and circumstances forming a part of the substance of my story; and not in the slightest degree bearing upon any events or personages which have more than an imaginary existence. This is the whole truth."

The prince could not avoid casting a significant glance at Tunbelly, as the prisoner delivered this unsophisticated narrative of the circumstances which led to his apprehension. The general was, in truth, for an instant under the influence of a mortification and disappointment as complete as were ever experienced by man. But he soon recovered himself: his good opinion of his own sagacity was too deeply rooted, and too well established, to be overthrown by such a result as this affair now promised; and,

notwithstanding the plausible statement which the prisoner had made, he felt assured in his own mind that he was at heart a traitor: "For," quoth Tunbelly to himself, "that he hath an irreverence for kings is very evident from the circumstance of his putting them to death, even in his own imagination; and this clearly shews if he had as much actual power as he had power of fancy, he would destroy kings in truth as much as he does now in fiction. Therefore, however ready the prince might be to overlook his present fault, and however disposed to let him loose to play the same pranks over again, I will always maintain, and all thinking men will support me in it, that he is a rank traitor."

"Well, Tunbelly," said his royal highness, "have you any thing further to allege in answer to what the stranger has

asserted? You have heard his defence against all the charges you have produced."

"Not all, my prince," answered the General. "The book of Ciphers! the book of Ciphers! He has not said a single syllable on that subject, your royal highness; they are all seditious signs and marks."

"If your royal highness will take the trouble to look at the papers," answered the stranger,—"you will convince yourself of the falsity of that charge, without my uttering a single syllable. Let me intreat that you will do me the favour to glance the characters; for, innocent as I am, and heinous as is the offence imputed to me, my acquittal ought to be at least complete and unequivocal."

The prince immediately complied with the stranger's request, and, glancing over the papers, instantly satisfied himself that the tremendous ciphers which had thrown Tunbelly into such a panic, were nothing more than short-hand characters. His royal highness immediately returned the manuscript to the stranger, replying to the General at the same time, " Tunbelly, this last charge of thine is to the full as unfortunate as the former ones. This man, for aught I can discover, has no more of the traitor about him than you have, and I see no reason for detaining him, if you have no more to say against him."

" But I have, your royal highness," returned the General, who was determined to leave no method untried to fix some charge upon the unfortunate prisoner. " When we had taken him, he vented much

disloyal complaints, not against your royal self only, but against all your advisers; alleging that you were all ungrateful, that he had laboured for these ten years to serve you, that he had frequently represented his distresses to you, and as frequently received fair promises; but, after all, had been left without a morsel of food or a rag to cover him, and thus he went on for some time in the presence of your royal highness's domestics, railing against your royal highness; and this is an offence of which we have abundant proof, and for which he can find none of his stale pretexts."

"That is an offence which must be enquired into seriously," returned the prince; "but it is not a crime against him, but against myself and my advisers. I will take care to investigate it, and if I find it just, I will take care that the stranger

shall have no future cause to complain on this score. I take shame to myself that there should be ground for such a charge."

Tears flowed from the stranger's eyes, and for some moments choked the words which endeavoured to find utterance. But it was but a momentary pause; for, recovering himself soon, the prisoner exclaimed, "Your royal highness is still the same amiable and generous prince as ever. May God preserve your royal highness from the attempts of all designing men! may your reign be long and productive of happiness, and, when it shall please the Almighty to call you from this temporary sphere, may you shine by his side for ever!"

It was a fervent prayer, the hallelujah of a grateful heart; and it was not lost upon the heart of the prince. It was a

richer cordial to his soul than he had tasted for a long time, and the rapture which he experienced as he commanded the servants to relieve the stranger, to take him with them and endeavour by their kindness to wipe away the impression of their cruelty, was a rapture of that generous legitimate description which has its source in good actions, and whose true tendency is to elevate the heart in which it reigns one step nearer to the Deity.

Tunbelly was very much dissatisfied with the result of this business, for he had confidently calculated upon its leading to a rapid promotion to new dignity and rank in the state, besides the addition which it would make to his character for sagacity. To have all these hopes not merely overthrown, although that would have been a sufficient trial for his fortitude; but to have them converted into

scenes of absolute ridicule to him, it was more than he could endure. Prudence, however, compelled him to acquiesce in the judgment of his royal master, not only without murmuring, but to add his tribute of affection to the praises which flowed from the tongues of all the courtiers round; although his heart was swollen with spleen nigh to bursting.

The mortification of the chop-fallen General was also much enhanced by the continual jokes which his royal highness now began to crack at his expence, for Tunbelly mortally hated to be laughed at, and he would have given his commission could he have reversed the decision of the prince, and have inflicted upon the poor author a punishment proportionate to the inveteracy of his own feeling.

" Well, General," said his royal high-

ness, when the prisoner had scarcely left his presence, "you have a keen nose after a traitor; I would not be a poor scribbler in your road another time, for I should not be surprised if you take an opportunity to revenge yourself upon the first of the species you meet, for the imaginary wrongs which you will pretend to have received from this poor fellow. But never mind, Tunbelly, as the old Latin grammar says, *nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit*; and we will learn to think that it was in your hour of weakness that you took up the man for a traitor."

"If I erred, your royal highness," replied Tunbelly, who was terribly piqued at the sarcasms thus thrown out against him, "I was led into the error by my ardour in your cause, and I hope therefore I may stand excused. And as for the man, why, although he might not

have been absolutely plotting treason at the moment he was taken, I think he is one of those men whom Shakespeare, denominated as "fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;" and it might not be amiss, if, after all, your royal highness were to command that every body should have a strict eye upon him."

"Pshaw, nonsense, my good General," returned the Prince; "there is no harm about the man. He requires protection rather than punishment. I do not accuse you of any error, my dear Funbelly; I know your attachment, and value it as I ought to do; but you must admit after all, that you were a little out in your conjecture; although you would have hung the poor devil at once."

"I was certainly a little too rash in my opinion, your royal highness," an-

swered the General, who was somewhat soothed by the condescending affability of his master. "I was a little too hasty; but it will operate upon me, and make me more cautious in future; although, in truth, had your royal highness been behind the shrubs where I was, and heard the manner in which the rogue went on, I do really think even your royal highness would have stood an excellent chance of being deceived. He really did seem to be the most desperate dog alive, according to his own words."

"I might have been deceived; I acknowledge I might!" returned the prince, with an increased affability of tone, "and therefore I will say no more about it. But *apropos*, General, have you heard of the run of luck which attended Sir Charles and myself last night against poor Lord Baron; and of the inde-

corous manner in which he bore his loss? I declare it was laughable in the extreme to hear his lordship stamp and rave, and vow vengeance against the cards, whilst Sir Charles and myself endeavoured in vain to sooth him into something like quietness of behaviour and of conversation?"

"Oh yes, your royal highness, I heard it all from Sir Charles," replied Tunbelly, "and I had the honour of assisting to escort his lordship home after the affair. Zounds, what a fury he was in! and when the baronet told him he must come to-day, and make an apology for his misbehaviour, how bitterly did he rave against fortune, and swore never more to come within the doors of this place!"

"But did you leave him in that singular mood? Did he persist to the last

in refusing to come to day to explain himself?" asked the prince, in a tone of mingled surprise and displeasure."

"We left his lordship in that humour most certainly, your royal highness," answered Tunbelly, "but, as I know it to be the intention of Sir Charles to call upon his lordship to-day, when he has regained his cooler reason, I have no doubt that the baronet will easily prevail upon him to come with him. Impoverished as he is, however, it is not to be wondered at that he should be somewhat restive."

"It was in truth a swinging loss," replied the prince: "I pocketed a cool twenty thousand, and Sir Charles about half the amount. A few such nights would make Baron stare; but be on the look out, Tunbelly, and see if you can

pick up his lordship and the baronet in your rambles to day, and bring them in with you. For the present, however, see to the stranger. 'Tis noble to forget your prejudices when the conviction is forced upon your mind that they are not borne out by reason and fact. Seek him, my good General, and let him be well entertained for the rest of the day; and get his address, that I may know where to send for him, when I have made inquiry into the circumstances of the case which he preferred against me. I must away to meet Lady Charlotte."

Saying this, the prince discharged Tunbelly, and the latter very soon made up his mind to bury all the animosity he felt towards the man he had before been so heartily disposed to persecute; and away he went to seek him, for the purpose of shewing him that he was no longer in-

clined to treat him with harshness and rigor. In adopting this line of conduct, it is probable that Tunbelly had an eye to his own interest, which he thought would be much better promoted by displaying such an unqualified obedience to the commands of the prince, than if he were to maintain his own opinions, and make them the rule of his conduct, in direct opposition to the wishes and desires of his royal master; for, although the prince might have taken no notice of the circumstance of his continuing to shew the illiberal prejudice which had no longer any grounds, even of suspicion, to rest upon, he calculated upon his acquiescence being of value to himself at some time or other.

The servants, in consequence of the specific orders given by their master to that effect, had vied with each other in

their kindness to the stranger, who, instead of regretting the adventure he had just met with, very soon found ample reason to rejoice that he had fallen into such good quarters; and the wine, of which he drank pretty plentifully, having unlocked his stores of social pleasantry, he speedily recompensed the domestics for their good cheer, by a number of entertaining tales, anecdotes, &c. and many sallies of wit, which kept the whole of the houshold in a roar of laughter.

Thus engaged did Tunbelly find his *quondam* prisoner; and, as the General knew how to apologize with a good grace, when such apology had a tendency to promote his own good, he very shortly found the way not simply to reconcile the differences which might be naturally supposed to exist between the stranger and himself, after the strange events which had taken

place, but even to ingratiate himself very considerably in the good opinion of the very individual who, a little while before, had treated his sagacity and penetration so cavalierly.

CHAPTER XVII.

Tunbelly's adventure gets wind, and Sir Charles hears it from Lady Rattle.—The baronet's visit to Teresa, and the happy arrangements to which it led.—Sir Charles, like all men in a similar situation, the happiest fellow in the universe.—His visit to Lord Baron, whom he finds penning a moral essay against gaming.—A sample of the essay, in the doctrines of which, for obvious purposes, the baronet fully coincides.—The reading interrupted by General Tunbelly.—The two repair to the Pavilion, to read the essay to the prince; but a few glasses of Noyeau prove that his lordship's opinions were quite superficial.

THE affair of Tunbelly's achievements, the capture of the supposed traitor, and his subsequent acquital, soon got wind. Sir Charles, who had gone out an hour

earlier than usual, to devote a portion of his gains the evening before to the purchase of some jewels, as a present to Teresa, had scarcely entered the shop of the jeweller before he was accosted by Lady Rattle,—"Dear me, Sir Charles, what a most ridiculous thing this is! I never laughed so heartily in my life before: though, after all, it would be cruel in me not to feel some pity for poor Tunbelly's mortification!"

"Mortification! Pity! Ridiculous!" echoed Sir Charles. "Really I am at a loss to know the exact meaning of your ladyship! I have not heard a syllable of any thing that has happened to Tunbelly!"

"Not heard of any thing, Sir Charles?" cried her ladyship; "why I thought you were upon the most intimate terms at the Pavilion; and knew every thing that

occurred there hours before any body else!"

"Your ladyship may be correct in the main," answered the baronet, smiling graciously, and feeling himself not a little elevated at the hint thrown out, as to his being on a good footing in a certain quarter, "but, in this instance, I do assure your ladyship, I am as utterly ignorant of the circumstance to which you allude, as though I were now at John O'Grot's house."

"Why, is it possible, my dear Sir Charles?" asked her ladyship, not a little pleased to think she had some news to communicate; "is it possible you have not heard of Tunbelly and the traitor?"

"Not a syllable on the subject, as I hope to be saved, my lady," answered the

baronet, putting on a look of complete astonishment; "will your ladyship favour me with the story?"

"To be sure I will, Sir Charles," Lady Rattle replied; —"but mind, now, I don't pledge myself to the truth of what I am going to tell you; so don't you go to make mischief. I will just give it to you as I received it. Early this morning, the General was in the shrubbery by the Pavilion, and there he heard a strange man plotting to shoot the prince, to burn down the Pavilion, to set fire to the metropolis and all the country, and to set up himself as king of the land. So the General, when he had heard it all, fetched a regiment of soldiers to take up this vile abominable traitor; who immediately underwent a severe examination beforn Tunbelly, and was threatened with the most ignominious death without delay."

"Bless my soul! what a horrible wretch!" cried the baronet, affecting an excessive horror on hearing of the imminent danger to which the prince had been subjected by the treasonable design of an unprincipled individual; and resuming, after a moment's pause, "But pray, my lady, what did you mean when you talked about pity, and ridiculous, and Tunbelly's mortification?"

"Why who should this traitor prove to be after all," answered her ladyship, "but a poor author, who had been allured into the fields by the beauty of the morning, to compose some little tale or another; and all the plots and murders, and so forth, that he talked about, were nothing more than the embellishments of his story; and this his royal highness discovered at the very first examination, and made Tunbelly go down upon his

knees and beg pardon of the poor man, for having so falsely and scandalously thrown imputations on his character."

"Well, if true, that was ridiculous enough," quoth Sir Charles, "but I think after all your ladyship is only hoaxing me. Tunbelly surely could not be such a fool as to make such a mistake!"

"Believe me, Sir Charles, I never was more serious in my life," answered her ladyship, "and if you should have occasion to call at the Pavilion to-day, you will find ground for the story."

Sir Charles lost no time in completing the purchase for which he came to the shop; and, all agog to carry the news which he had just heard, made the best of his way to Lady Evergreen's, and soon found himself in the presence of his

charming fair, who seemed not a little delighted at the punctuality with which her unsteady baronet had adhered to his present engagement.

"Have not you heard the news, my dear?" was the first salutation of Sir Charles, who was as arrant a male gossip as ever chased scandal up and down Bond-street; and upon Teresa replying in the negative, and expressing a curiosity to know what had so evidently flurried her lover, the baronet immediately related the story he had picked up from Lady Rattle, garnished with a number of little circumstances, which seemed in his opinion necessary to render the dish palatable to female taste.

"And do you believe it all, Sir Charles?" asked Teresa, in a tone of voice which seemed to speak her own incredulity on

the subject. "Dont you think it is all a mere hoax of Lady Rattle's?"

"Why, to say truth, my dear girl," said Sir Charles, "I did accuse her ladyship of a design to hoax me, but she so seriously denied the charge, that upon my honour I think she had no such intention."

Sir Charles now took occasion to turn the conversation to a subject which more immediately interested her; and in the course of an hour's *tête-à-tête* with Teresa, whether it was by the force of his own eloquence. or the additional influence which it acquired from the rich presents he brought her, it may be difficult to determine; but, before they separated, Sir Charles had prevailed upon her to consent that their union should take place on that night fortnight, pro-

vided he could succeed in gaining the consent of Lady Evergreen to the arrangement.

Sir Charles lost not a moment in repairing to her ladyship, to sound her inclinations on the subject; and his happiness seemed completely established, when he found her ladyship not at all disposed to throw any impediment in the way of his wishes. Lady Evergreen, in fact, had more than once been annoyed by the apprehension that her daughter would remain a fixture upon her hands; and more particularly did this fear harass her repose during the short coolness which had recently taken place between Sir Charles and Teresa. Although a few months ago the baronet was not exactly the man she would have pitched upon as a suitable match for her daughter, yet he had latterly given such

strong proofs of the improving nature of his property, in the increased number and value of the presents he brought to offer at the shrine of love, and his growing intimacy and influence in a certain distinguished quarter, which was now become the topic of conversation in all the fashionable circles, had added so much to his eligibility in her opinion, that, instead of displaying any coolness or indifference upon the subject, it was now the desire of her heart to see the match brought to a happy conclusion.

Circumstances at this visit being placed in such a happy train, away went Sir Charles to make his promised ca upon Lord Baron; eager at once to possess his lordship of the news which he had himself picked up, and to try the power of his eloquence in persuading his lordship to accompany him in order to proffer his apology at the Pavilion.

His lordship was at breakfast when the baronet entered; and although the recollection of his loss on the preceding evening still bore rather heavily upon his feelings, he was not that impetuous being which he had been the evening before. He appeared sunk in a sort of gloomy abstraction; and so deeply, in fact, was he immersed in his own thoughts, that he neither noticed the entrance nor the salutation of the baronet, until for the second time the latter had bid him good morning, and asked him if he had heard the news.

On the repetition of the question, his lordship suddenly roused himself from his apathy, apologized for his absence of mind, and, wishing Sir Charles to be seated, replied, "No, my dear baronet, I have heard no news. In fact, ever since I got up, which is about an hour and a

half ago. I have been composing an Essay on Gaming, you shall hear it. Most heartily did Sir Charles wish him and his essay at the devil, when he found that his lordship had thus occupied his morning, for the circumstance augured very little success to the object of his visit; he was constrained, however, to conceal his real sentiments, and to reply, " A practical essay of course, my lord! ah, it is the way with us all. I remember very well the first time I lost a heavy sum, I sat down and held an argument with myself for two hours, in which I proved to demonstration that every man who frequents a gaming-house ought to be hanged for a maniac. It was all perfectly natural, but the very next bottle of wine I took overthrew all my reasoning.—To it I went again, and that very evening recovered all my loss, and put two or three thousand pounds in my pocket, but *apropos*, my

lord, I must tell you about Tunbelly and the traitor, if you have not heard it."

His lordship expressed his entire ignorance of the circumstance to which the baronet alluded, and his wish to become acquainted with the particulars; on which the baronet entered into the whole particulars of the affair, as he had related it to Teresa. His lordship, however, not being in a humour to enjoy the story at this moment, contented himself with a dry remark upon its improbability; adding, "Supposing it to be true, it must be very much over-coloured, as these sort of things generally are before they reach us, in order to make them tell with effect."

"Your lordship will soon have an opportunity of knowing," replied Sir Charles, "as I suppose you will have no objection

to accompany me to the Pavilion, where you are expected."

"Gently, Sir Charles," returned his lordship; "you have already heard my opinion upon that; not that I would willingly do any thing to offend his royal highness, but the very sight of the palace, after my loss last night, could not fail to excite a variety of unpleasing sensations. You say you yourself have lost heavy sums, and have come to similar resolutions in consequence, you will not be at a loss, therefore, in making an excuse for my absence. But come, Sir Charles, you shall hear my Essay on Gaming.

Sir Charles flattered himself that by acceding to his lordship's request, he might the more readily prevail upon him afterwards to retract the resolution to which he

at present so obstinately adhered. He accordingly expressed himself perfectly ready to pay the requisite attention, adding, "It cannot be a very extraordinary length, my lord."

"Quite short," answered his lordship; and, taking up a paper which lay upon the breakfast table beside him, after two or three hems, he began to read as follows:

"Gaming is the most dangerous of all vices, and its danger principally lies in that irresistible infatuation with which it takes hold of the mind. Reason is first hushed to sleep, and the first moment of its slumber is the signal for all the evil passions of the breast to wake. The rapid succession of powerful feelings completely precludes the interference of reflection. A moment's thought might

be fatal to the delusion, and while thought can be shut out, the charm of vice will keep its power."

"Yes," interrupted Sir Charles, "that is just what I said; if you had heard me talking to myself the day after I lost twenty thousand pounds, you could not have hit my thoughts more nearly. But go on, my lord; there's nothing like a good sober loss to make one sit down and moralize. But you should take a bottle of Burgundy, my lord; and I'll answer for it that will change your reflections."

His lordship made no answer to this remark of Sir Charles, but went on with his manuscript—"Gaming is not so dreadful as an individual vice, as in its character as a prolific parent of a thousand others. In numberless instances it has produced adultery, robbery, and suicide. It is not

possible to contemplate a more horrid concatenation of vices."

At this moment, as Sir Charles was upon the point of making another comment, a servant announced General Tunbelly, to the great delight of Sir Charles, to whose assistance the General was come in the luckiest nick of time imaginable; and to the no-small chagrin of his lordship, who was thus prevented from mouthing the residue of his interesting essay.

"Well met," said the General, as he entered the room. "A thousand times good morning, my lord; what, here you are in close consultation together; aye, I see how it is very well! plotting to revenge yourselves! Well, my lord, I hope you will have better luck next time, that's all; fortune is not always in the same unpropitious mood."

"Oh! his lordship has foresworn gambling for ever," cried the baronet, "and has just been reading me a lecture of his own writing, to prove that gaming is the most dangerous vice in all the catalogue of human offences. Pray, my lord, do not let Tunbelly interrupt you; your piece is just to his taste. Your lordship left off at suicide."

"Not quite so fast, Sir Charles," said his lordship. "What was this story you were telling me about the General? Suppose we ascertain the length of that before I go on with my essay."

Tunbelly was thunderstruck: he had not an idea that the tale of his morning's adventure had been so soon winded all over the town. Since, however, it was ready to be thrown in his teeth, he determined to laugh it off, as a thing not worth

a moment's consideration. "Ah!" said he, " what have you got hold of the trick I played the poor author? Zounds! How I wished you had both been there! You would have enjoyed it prodigously. The poor devil thought that he was surely going to be committed for treason."

"Why it was a mere trick after all, eh, General?" returned his lordship. "Well, I would have betted my life that it was no serious blunder, although Sir Charles asserted it."

"I gave it you, my lord," returned the baronet, "as I had it from Lady Rattle: And although I accused her ladyship of a design to hoax me, she put on a countenance of such uncommon gravity, and vowed so prettily and so solemnly that I should find it all correct, as she had stated

it, that I could not avoid giving credit to her tale."

"A mere *jeu d'esprit*, I assure you," cried the General. "You could not surely think I was such a flat as to mistake a poor devil of a scribbler for a traitor, could you?" But come, my lord, you will accompany the baronet, and myself to the Pavilion. His royal highness will be anxious for your arrival, for he dispatched me expressly for you."

"His royal highness confers on me a marked distinction," replied his lordship, "but I have said I will never enter those doors again. In fact, I have gone further,—I have made a vow——"

"A rash vow, which would be more honoured in the breach than the observance," as one of our authors has written,"

replied the General; "and, in good truth, my lord, do you mean to make this silly vow, made in a moment of anger, a pretext for not going to pay your respects to the prince? A truce with your jesting! Bring your essay with you: it will delight the prince to hear you read it."

This was the time for the baronet to chime in, and, accordingly he began a high flown panegyric upon his royal highness, in which he took occasion to extol him for a thousand virtues more than are generally contained in the catalogue of human qualifications. "Aye," cried Sir Charles, "that essay will please the prince down to the very ground: the sentiments are entirely his own: although the theory which it is the object of the piece to support, like many other very pretty theories, is quite impracticable, unless you could, at the same time, change the natural dispositions and habits of mankind."

"I perfectly agree with the baronet," said Tunbelly, "that, delightful as the doctrine is which your lordship designs to inculcate in this essay, man must be completely metamorphosed before he will be fit to receive it. But let us away to the Pavilion, and take the opinion of his royal highness on the matter; for your lordship cannot but allow the absolute pre-eminence of his taste."

His lordship still hesitated: but as he did not persist in his refusal with that determined obstinacy which he had previously displayed, the General and Sir Charles kept an incessant attack upon his weak side; and his lordship not having been endued with more wit and sagacity than generally fell to the lot of nine-tenths of the community, swallowing all they said with respect to their royal master's relish for productions of this description, after a

few struggles with himself, which became gradually weaker and weaker, put his essay in his pocket and I accompanied them.

Sir Charles was not a little elated by this victory, for he had more than once, in his own mind, given up the contest, and felt a disposition to quit the field. The arrival of Tunbelly indeed gave new vigour to his hopes, and new impulse to his energies: and now that the triumph was completed, the baronet began to anticipate a repetition of the last evening's amusement, and to felicitate himself upon another, and not an inconsiderable acquisition, to his fortune. He possessed, however, sufficient prudence to prevent his emotions from overflowing the boundaries of decorum; and to suppress every point, either by word or countenance, which could lead his lordship to suspect that his thoughts were still "harping on" the gaming table.

Tunbelly also, who ever since he first heard of his lordship's ill luck on his first essay at the Pavilion, had been plagued with a perpetual anxiety to be pitted against him, flattered himself that the opportunity was now thrown in his way by fortune; and he had sufficient confidence in his skill and knowledge of play to think that if the prince and Sir Charles succeeded in obtaining such a signal advantage, he himself might at lest calculate upon as excellent a result, and in coming off an ample participator in the profits and honor of the evening.

In this manner did these two worthies beguile the way to the Pavilion; and it followed, as a natural consequence, that while they were thus deeply engaged with their reflections, they left my Lord Baron ample leisure to attend to his own, it may not be amiss to enquire into their nature

His lordship, then, was principally occupied in anticipating the effect which his essay was likely to produce upon the mind of the prince; for, having accustomed himself now and then to scribble scraps of poetry, the lameness and inanity of which did not prevent his friends from lavishing upon them an abundant measure of praise; and, having also occasionally written a page of prose upon some light subject, in one or two of those monthly miscellanies which are eager to catch at any nonsense which the vanity of amateur writers imposes upon them, because it comes to them *gratis*; his lordship, without the talents, possessed all the vanity and the ambition of an author. Although the essay in question was written with a view to be instantly transmitted to one of those works which have been alluded to, his lordship very naturally determined that the approbation of such an exalted personage as

the prince (for he calculated most confidently upon unqualified approval) would stamp a degree of excellence upon his essay which it could not otherwise obtain or hope for with the public; for he deigned to imitate the custom of those high-born scribblers who, while publishing their productions, unanimously take care, through a thousand channels, to make themselves known.

The prince himself had not calculated upon such an early arrival of his lordship; but, attributing the circumstance to a desire to apologize for his misconduct on the former evening, and, at the same time, with all that ardor which every man in his royal highness's situation would have experienced, coupling with the idea the hope of new gains, the prince, with a condescending graciousness, which none could better assume when occasions re-

quired it, held out his hand to his lordship, welcomed him to the palace, and begged him to make no allusion to the circumstances of the preceding evening.

His lordship, misunderstanding the exact meaning of his royal highness, and imagining that he merely intended for him not to revive the subject of gaming, augured, from such an interdiction, a disposition on the part of the prince in favor of himself and his essay. Merely bowing his head, in token both of his homage and his acquiescence in the commands of the prince, he prepared to fix the attention and the esteem of his royal highness by reading his essay; and with this view he began to fumble in his pocket for the manuscript, when Sir Charles made reply for him,—"Your royal highness, my Lord Baron has been just penning a most beautiful essay on the subject

of gaming, which we have, with difficulty, prevailed upon him to bring hither to read to your royal highness*."

The prince required no further explanation to convince him of the mistake he had made, in supposing that his lordship had spontaneously come to offer his concessions for the rudeness of his former conduct; but, as he was by no means disposed to adopt any formality of manner which might have the effect of shortening his lordship's visit, he returned, in a cautious tone of voice,—"It will give me abundant pleasure to hear his lordship's essay. Gaming is a most destructive vice, and has produced, in numberless instances, the most fatal consequences. I view it with abhorrence in my moments of cool reflection, although I am sometimes hurried into it by my natural ardor of disposition. But go, Tunbelly, fetch some *liqueur* to render the essay more palatable."

Away went Tunbelly, who was always happy to become the Mercury on these occasions, and very speedily returned with some choice Noyeau, two or three glasses of which so exhilarated the spirits of his lordship, that his imagination received an impulse which he could scarcely sufficiently curb, to suffer him to enter upon the dull task of reading his essay. Tunbelly saw the effect produced by the Noyeau, and followed up the doses with such rapidity, that his lordship was disqualified for reading in less than half-an-hour, and, replacing his essay in his pocket, acquiesced in a proposal of Sir Charles to play a game at *rouge et noir*.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The ill success of Lord Baron's new attempt upon fortune—He discovers symptoms of having profited by his experience—The spontaneous magnanimity of the Prince, which eclipses all his faults —The unwilling magnanimity of Sir Charles and Tunbelly, whom etiquette compels to follow their master's example—Lord Baron rashly publishes his own story, which speedily gets wind—The consequences of this rashness visible— The coolness of all the fashionable circles towards him —His grace's tenaciousness of his character—His lordship leaves Brighton—Public applauses of Sir Charles and Tunbelly.

FORTUNE, as if determined to inflict a most weighty punishment upon my Lord Baron for his inconsistency, most ruthlessly repelled every advance which he made

to her in the course of this day; and as his lordship became more desperate in proportion as the games went against him, before he rose from the table at sunset, he was *minus* in no less a sum than sixty thousand pounds.

It had been a continued series of ill-luck; in no one instance had the chances varied in his favour, yet at the termination of the play, his lordship, to the great astonishment of the prince, Sir Charles, and the General, instead of breaking forth into any intemperance of conduct as before, settled his losses with the utmost composure of countenance, and appeared in all respects, as though he had experienced no reverse of fortune.

"I sincerely sympathize with your lordship," said the prince, and for my own part I cannot consent to receive my share

of the winnings. I pray your lordship to consider your debt to me liquidated."

This act of generosity astonished the peer no less than it did Tunbelly and Sir Charles. The astonishment of the first was blended with a degree of pleasure of the highest extent; but, in the two latter, surprise was accompanied by contention and disappointment, since both of them considered that it was a part of their duty as courtiers to follow the example of their master, however it might operate against their feelings.

"Your royal highness's magnanimity is almost beyond belief," exclaimed Lord Baron; "but I have fairly lost it, and I must stand the consequence of my rashness. The punishment I have received is the just due of my folly, and I must not shun the endurance of it; for, though se-

vere, it will doubtless be advantageous in the lasting lesson which it cannot fail to impress upon my mind."

Sir Charles vowed within himself that he had never heard sounder logic than this, and his hopes revived as he considered the possibility of its producing a change of determination in the prince. But this secret anticipation was soon defeated by the reply which his royal highness made, in a more distinct tone of voice than he was accustomed to adopt: "No, Baron, you have been punished enough in the violent agitation in which your feelings have been kept for the last four hours—I will not take the winnings! It is my command that you comply, and henceforward I pronounce against gaming in this place."

"Chaos is come again!" quoth Sir Charles mentally; and there was doubt-

less a strong and striking sympathy in the sentiments of Tunbelly, who looked "unutterable things." In the meantime, Lord Baron, whose scruples were put to the test by the positive command of the prince, could not avoid regarding his royal highness as a being very superior to the ordinary classes of mankind; for surely no man, operated upon by those feelings of interest which are inseparable from the human bosom, unless he were gifted with virtues superior to those usually bestowed on his species, could spontaneously yield so manifest an advantage.

His royal highness, however, looked for his reward in the approbation of his conscience. The generous act had been suggested by one of those sudden impulses of feeling for which it is not easy to account. Previous to the commencement of the game, the idea had never once crossed his

brain, so, whether it was the contemplation of the dreadful agitation under which Baron manifestly laboured during the progress of his loss, or of the ultimate composure which he displayed when it had reached its uttermost extent, which worked upon his royal highness's mind; it was a circumstance which powerfully proved that, however the prince may have submitted his reason to the tyranny of passion at times, there was an inherent love of virtue,—an inherent virtue itself in his bosom, one corruscation of which was sufficiently brilliant to eclipse a thousand of those follies, without which there is no man in existence, but which in a prince are more marked, because, being placed on such an elevated situation, they stand conspicuous to all mankind

Notwithstanding the unwillingness of the baronet to make a sacrifice of his in-

terests, to that extent which etiquette required, there was no alternative but to follow the great example of his master. He was therefore compelled to assume a virtue, though he had it not: and since necessity thus controuled him, policy suggested that he should do it with as good a grace as possible. With a smiling countenance and courteous manner, which were both very much opposed to his real feeling, he accordingly made his offer in the following terms:—"My dear lord, I do not feel a greater pleasure in surrendering to you all my claim to any share in the winnings, than I do in contemplating that magnanimity of the prince, which had set me such a glorious example. I have already told your lordship my own opinion respecting this destructive vice; and, although I have been allured into the practice by a wish to kill time, I am most happy in taking this opportunity to express my unqualified abhorrence of it."

Tunbelly was much more mortified than even Sir Charles, since his feelings of disappointment were not in the slightest degree qualified by the cheering reflection that he had obtained any profits out of the former loss of his lordship. Although Sir Charles was obliged to give up his present winnings, at the first sitting he had carried off no inconsiderable booty; and this was a sort of set-off to his present sacrifice. But the General, being called upon by the example of the prince to relinquish the whole of his gains, considered that the operation of that example fell much more heavily upon himself than it did upon Sir Charles. He was obliged, however, to submit with as good a grace as possible; but, not daring to trust himself with making a long speech upon the subject, lest his language or tone might betray the real feelings of his heart, he contented himself with couch-

ing the surrender of his winnings in the following brief sentence. "Indeed, my lord, you must excuse me, I can't think of taking it."

His lordship, thus pressed on every side, after as much resistance as a proper regard for his own dignity seemed to require, yielded up his scruples, and readily acquiesced in the proposed generosity of his adversaries; and the immediate effect which this acquiescence produced upon his feelings was that kind of exhilaration which the most glowing language would be incompetent to describe.

A few minutes before, his lordship would have freely given a considerable sum to prevent the circumstance and extent of his loss from being blazoned forth before the world. But now, in the first powerful emotions of grateful feeling,

although cool reflection probably might have checked such an unguarded flow of gratitude, his lordship had scarcely left the Pavilion, before he imparted the whole affair to the first person he met on the parade, and who happened to be none other than Lady Rattle herself. The enthusiastic ardor with which his lordship eulogised the character and conduct of the prince, communicated a portion of its influence to her ladyship; who made such good use of the information she had thus picked up, that in the course of the day it was publicly asserted in every fashionable company in the town, that Lord Baron had lost that morning the whole of his property, to the amount of half a million, to the prince, Sir Charles Placid, and General Tunbelly; but that they, with a generosity absolutely without parallel, had made him a present of the whole of their winnings, and thus restored him

to the opulence which he had just forfeited.

"Did you ever hear of such a magnanimous act, my dear Lady Babblewell?" asked Lady Rattle of an old dowager, to whom she had just been relating the whole of the circumstances:—"Did you ever hear of such generosity? I declare it puts to the blush every charitable act that ever came to my knowledge; and it ought to be written in letters of gold, and put up in all parish churches!"

"To be sure it ought!" answered Lady Babblewell.—"Well, I always said his royal highness was a most benevolent prince; and this confirms it all indeed. But pray, Lady Rattle, do you think it was just the thing in my Lord Baron to accept the property again, after he had so fairly lost it? I don't think it was

that honourable conduct which I should have expected from him."

"Why true," replied Lady Rattle, "that did not exactly occur to me before: but I do think it makes his lordship look rather contemptible—very contemptible—very contemptible indeed! I wonder much, that his lordship was so mean as to accept the present; and that was abominably mean, as you say, my dear Lady Babblewell, he had not more spirit than to talk about it."

"Well, there is no knowing of people," returned Lady Babblewell.—"I declare there is nothing but meanness and deception in the world. For my part, I always thought Lord Baron one of the finest spirited young men of the day; but I will never trust any man again. I never heard of such an instance of shocking

meanness! It almost surpasses the bounds of credulity! But, as your ladyship assures me you had it from his lordship himself, I must believe it; but if I meet him, I shall think it my duty to toss up my head, and not speak to him."

"And I think you are perfectly right, my dear Lady Babblewell," answered Lady Rattle; "his lordship has quite disgraced patrician rank, and is quite a monster in my opinion. But pray what do you think of the generous conduct of Sir Charles and General Tunbelly? In my opinion, both of them deserve nothing less than to be absolutely canonized."

"They do deserve it, my dear Lady Rattle," replied Lady Babblewell—"and into whatever company I go, I shall make it as much a point of conscience to speak in praise of their conduct, as I shall to

express my detestation and contempt of my Lord Baron. I declare, into the very first company of fashionables that I go, I shall propose to vote his lordship to Coventry."

Two or three other gossiping dowagers coming in at that moment, it was unanimously agreed upon amongst them, that Lord Baron merited all the odium which had been cast upon his character; and that it was the duty of each of them to use all possible industry to disseminate amongst her connection the tale of his meanness. And immediately, upon coming to this resolution, away they all posted to pursue the delightful occupation of blackening the character of this indelible disgrace to the peerage.

Lady Babblewell's house was, in fact, the very source of slander. When they

resided in town, the abode was the rendezvous of all those antiquated dowagers, who, having neither husband nor children to amuse them, could discover no more effectual remedy for *ennui*, than a little pleasant tittle-tattle with each other, upon the subject of other people's reputation. It was here that calumnies were forged according to all the rules of art; and it was hence that they were sent forth to work their mischiefs amongst mankind. When Lady Babblewell moved to a watering place, her intention having been previously made known to all the established coterie of gossips, like a mountebank, she either carried with her or was immediately followed by all those persons who were necessary to assist in the practice of her impositions upon the credulity of the public.

A very short time had elapsed after the

the resolutions had been passed at her ladyship's house, respecting Lord Baron, before the effect of them was visible in the altered demeanour of all those persons who had been accustomed to meet his lordship with all possible demonstrations of the most marked respect, as a nobleman of high rank and fortune.

Lord Baron, by the time he had reached his home, had partially recovered from those powerful feelings of admiration and astonishment which had, for the moment, deprived him of his wonted coolness of reflection; and the first effort of his sober thoughts was self-accusation for having so hastily and incautiously communicated the circumstances which had so recently occurred at the Pavilion to Lady Rattle. He was well acquainted with her ladyship's disposition and character, and the more he con-

sidered the nature of the information which he had given to her, the more did he feel chagrined at that unpardonable impetuosity of disposition which had prompted him to the folly of giving it.

His lordship felt assured that the matter would not rest where it was. He had put himself in the power of a most incorrigible babbler, and had no alternative but to make up his mind boldly to meet the consequences of his incautiousness. He accordingly attempted to act upon this resolution: and, assuming a courage which he was far from feeling in his heart, sallied forth as usual to mingle amongst the loungers of fashion who assemble every evening at Duodecimo's library, to participate in such amusements as the wit of the bookseller could suggest.

A groupe of fashionables engrossed the fire-place, and his lordship had scarcely entered the shop before he observed a palpable shyness towards him. Hitherto he had been uniformly greeted the moment he made his appearance, by a thousand fervent enquiries after his health: but now, not an individual approached him: a loud whisper ran through the whole of the groupe, and the side-looks which were now and then cast towards him told him in language which was perfectly intelligible, not only that he was the subject of them, but that they conveyed sentiments hostile to him.

He advanced to accost one or two ladies with whom he had been accustomed to hold gossip; but who now, instead of receiving him with their usual familiarity, merely acknowledged his salutation, by a

formal and forbidding curtsey; or, after they had made a civil reply to his interrogatory, affected to be attracted by something in another corner of the shop, and very abruptly left him.

This treatment was not confined to a single instance, but, being repeated upon several attempts made by his lordship to enter into a conversation, he could no longer entertain a doubt of the assiduous manner in which Lady Rattle had availed herself of the information which he had so unfortunately communicated to her. He accordingly retired from the shop; and, returning to his own residence, loaded himself with a thousand reproaches for the worse than boyish stupidity, with which he had promulgated the story of his own weakness.

On the following morning his lordship

waited upon Lady Rattle, not only with a view to prevent the mischief from being spread further, but also to require some sort of explanation of the nature of that report which she had circulated respecting him, and which in his opinion had been coloured beyond the truth, to give cause for the cool reception he had every where met with. To his utter dismay, however, he only received a denial to his interrogatory if Lady Rattle was at home, and he had sufficient knowledge of fashionable life to understand that this was a polite hint to him never to repeat his visits in that quarter. A letter, in which he expressed all he had meant to convey by word of mouth, received no kind of reply; and the door of redress was thus finally closed.

The next resolution which his lordship adopted was to leave Brighton, and re-

turn to the metropolis; for, although he might have been received as usual at the Pavilion, and there, under the immediate patronage of his royal highness, have successfully combated the tide of prejudice which had been set in motion against him, he scorned to have recourse to any such artifice to win back the unsteady attentions, of those circles, which he began now most cordially to despise. But independent of this feeling, considering that he had already made himself look sufficiently mean in the eyes of the prince, by receiving back that property which he had lost, he could not bring himself to go back with a whining confession that he was forsaken by all his acquaintance, and to pray that he might be screened from further neglect or insult, by being permitted to take refuge until the storm should pass over, under the wing of his royal highness.

A circumstance very moral in its nature indeed, yet calculated to make a strong impression upon the mind of his lordship, in its present agitated state, occurred the very next day, which gave a new stimulus to his determination, and induced him to expedite the preparations for his departure. While seated at the breakfast table, an uproar under his window excited his attention, and, on approaching to ascertain the cause, he saw his own valet in the hands of a groupe of the same fraternity, who had completely covered him with filth of every description; so that his livery was scarcely distinguishable. He immediately rang the bell to demand the cause of this scene of confusion; and in a few minutes the maltreated servant made his appearance before his master.

"How is this, Edward?" inquired his

lordship. "What is the cause of this disturbance under my window? and who are the fellows who seemed to have entered into a conspiracy against you?"

"I'll tell you my lord," answered the servant; "I was just coming over the parade, when I met two or three valets of my acquaintance, and, as I was going to speak to them as usual, I saw them shy off, as though they had a mind to get away from me without speaking; so, my lord, I halloed to one, and that obliged him to turn round; but, instead of speaking as he was used to do, he looked at me with all the contempt in the world, and said with a sneer, "I say, Ned, your master's a shabroon, and while you continue in his service, I dont care to be seen in your company, nor to be heard speaking to you, so my service to you, Ned." Then, my lord, I thought it my duty to stand up

for your character, so I told him plainly, my master was as good as his—then he told me I was a liar—and then I knocked him down—upon which all the rest came back, and began calling me shab, and jostling me, and pelting me with all sorts of dirt; and in this way they followed me all the way home, when I found the numbers were so much against me, I thought it most prudent, my lord, to make the best of my way back again."

His lordship felt a greater degree of mortification at this little incident, perhaps, than at the direct slights which had been offered to himself at the library. "Well, Edward," said he, "I am very sorry that such an unpleasant circumstance should have taken place, but, however, here's a ten pound note, which I hope will do away with the impression."

"I humbly thank your lordship," replied the valet, "and I hope your lordship will excuse me for giving you notice to quit; for and please your lordship, reputation is all a servant can depend upon, and I find that if I continue to serve your lordship much longer, I shall entirely lose my character; and then if I leave your lordship what will become of me?"

"Well, Edward, as you please," replied his lordship; "give orders, however, that the carriage be got ready immediately, for I shall sleep in town this night, and prepare yourself for instant departure."

As soon as he had received his orders, the servant withdrew; and his lordship, throwing himself on the sofa, burst out into such a strain of reproaches against

himself and all those circles in which he had hitherto moved, that any observer would have felt no kind of difficulty in setting down his lordship for an inveterate maniac. Upon Lady Rattle in particular his execrations fell most lavishly, since it was evidently to her incurable itch for scandal that he was indebted for all the obloquy which had in such ample streams assailed him.

In pursuance to his resolution, about noon his lordship entered his carriage, and in the space of a few moments had taken his leave of Brighton. Said he,—"It will be long, indeed, thou nest of slander and follies, before I visit thee again. I will away to the metropolis; and, if I find the evil dæmon of scandal pursue me there, why I will e'en quit town with as little reluctance as I now feel in quitting thee, and take up my abode in some foreign

country, where I may forget the indignities so unjustly offered to me, and have the equal consolation of being myself forgotten."

The departure of his lordship was soon noised abroad; and it was not long before Tunbelly conveyed the information to his royal highness, together with the motives assigned for the cause of his sudden departure to the fashionable world; and the prince, not a little chagrined to find that poor Baron had been thus wantonly and most cruelly aspersed and persecuted because he rendered obedience to those commands which he could not disobey. At his royal highness's request, Tunbelly took upon himself the task of writing a letter to his lordship full of the most flattering expressions of his royal highness's high consideration for him, and assuring him that, on the return of the prince to town,

no person would be accounted a more welcome visitor at the palace of his royal highness than his lordship.

This letter was, indeed, a powerful antidote to his lordship's ill-usage; and, according to its palpable interest, he made use of it in those circles to which the rumour, which had driven him from Brighton, had reached; and its immediate effect was visible in the happy alteration which it effected upon the behaviour of all those individuals who were made acquainted with its contents.

But, while the contempt of the fashionable circles drove away Lord Baron from Brighton, their lavish praises produced effects almost as irksome to Sir Charles and Tunbelly; for his royal highness, being removed completely out of the possibility of coming in contact with public

opinion, escaped the burden which the admiration of all classes might otherwise have heaped upon him. Wherever the General and the Baronet appeared, they were met with the most enthusiastic compliments from persons of both sexes, and of all ranks in the scale of fashion, and were absolutely overwhelmed with caresses.

Whether, however, it was the consciousness that the act, which had thus gained them so ample a portion of applause, was forced from them by the spontaneous example of the prince; and, therefore, that all the praises which were lavished upon them were, as a matter of right, only deserved by the prince, Tunbelly, and Sir Charles went less into company, during the rage of this feeling which so severely annoyed them; the former passing most of his hours with his *inamo-*

rata on the beach, unless when the duties of his situation required his attendance on his royal master; and the latter absenting himself altogether from the Pavilion, and devoting himself almost exclusively to the society of his Teresa, who was now busily engaged in making those preparations for her marriage, which both the custom of the times and female caprice demanded.

CHAPTER XIX.

The preparations for Lady Charlotte's festival completed, and the introduction of Teresa at the Pavilion.—The opinion of the prince as to Sir Charles's taste.—The effect which the attentions of royalty produce throughout the circle of fashion, who all obey one impulse.—Lady Rattle's congratulation and curiosity.—Her ladyship's agitation and affectation, which plunges poor Teresa into a very awkward dilemma.—Teresa's confusion aggravated to a degree almost intolerable.—Sir Charles prevails on Tunbelly to take Lady Rattle off their hands.—The General contrives to tell her some news, and to send her off to communicate the same to Lady Babblewell. Further marks of royal favor, and its effects upon the minds of the party.

THE approaching festivities for the celebration of Lady Charlotte's birth-day, occupied the whole attention of the

fashionables. It was determined to give a grand concert and ball on the occasion; and it was privately whispered about that the spouse of Lady Charlotte, whose celebrity as an amateur singer stood very high indeed, would, on this occasion exert his vocal powers for the gratification of the visitors, accompanied on the piano-forte by Lady Charlotte herself, whose knowledge of music and execution were unexcelled Such an amusement could not fail to make every fashionable circle unusually eager to obtain admission to this fête; and every kind of interest was put in requisition to obtain a supply of tickets for such persons as by accident or design had been omitted in the list of invitations.

This festivity was to take place about two days before the time fixed for the marriage of Sir Charles and Teresa; and, as

the baronet had communicated to his royal highness, not only the fact of the intended marriage, but the approach of the day fixed on for the solemnization, the prince not only presented him with tickets for the party, but condescended to express his wish that Sir Charles would introduce his *chere amie* to him, in order that he might have an opportunity of distinguishing her by his notice; an honor which the prince was well aware the baronet would consider an ample recompense for all he had suffered.

No sooner was this piece of agreeable intelligence conveyed to Lady Evergreen and her daughter, than the former considered herself elevated to the very pinnacle of happiness and ambition. His royal highness she had always considered as very affable, and positively the best bred gentleman in Europe; but this instance

of unusual condescension completely eclipsed all his former acts of kindness, and so perfectly established his royal highness in her ladyship's good opinion, that she instantly undertook the office of trumpeting forth his praises through the whole of the extensive circle of her acquaintance.

Teresa was also much flattered by such a singular mark of his royal highness's urbanity; and selected for herself a dress, which made her look so exquisitely beautiful in the eyes of her enamoured baronet, that when he introduced her at the Pavilion, and was leading her to receive the compliments of the prince, his heart almost misgave him lest her beauties should make too deep an impression on the combustible passions of the prince.

"I give you full credit for your taste,

my dear baronet," said the prince, taking Teresa by the hand; "and do not wonder that you should be anxious to make such a splendid jewel your own. And, madam," he continued, turning to the blushing damsel, "allow me to assure you, you would have had some difficulty in finding a heart more capable of receiving tender impressions than that of the baronet."

"I am happy to receive your royal highnesses's approbation of my choice," answered Sir Charles, swelling with mingled pride and pleasure at the praises which his royal highness bestowed on Teresa; "but, sir, allow me to assure you, that the beauties of her mind as far surpass those of her person, as the splendor of the diamond is superior to that of the glittering and imposing casket in which the gem is inclosed."

"Nay, Sir Charles," cried Teresa, blushing a deep crimson as she spoke, "these are indeed unmeaning compliments; and I must beseech your royal highness to believe that the charms which the baronet has taken such pains to describe, exist only in his feverish imagination. I have no claim on your royal highness's attention beyond that of any other individual of the group with which you are surrounded."

"Pardon me, madam," quoth the Prince, "but that single expression convinces me to the contrary. I honor Sir Charles more for the wisdom he has displayed in selecting you from amongst the circle of vain giddy females which swarm in the sphere of fashion, than for every other circumstance of his life, with which my short intimacy with him has made me acquainted."

Here the conversation was broken off by the entrance of fresh company; but the circumstance of a dialogue having taken place between the prince and Miss Evergreen was speedily whispered from one end of the room to the other; and in a few moments Teresa was surrounded by a complete crowd of fashionables of both sexes, who hastened to pay their most marked attention to the lady who had been engaged in such familiar chit-chat with the prince. Sir Charles was courtier enough to see their motive, but he was too much pleased with the notice which was taken of his beloved Teresa to discover any thing like a disrelish on his part of that species and extent of flattery which meant nothing to the person to whom it was offered, and was merely given as a tribute to the taste of the prince.

The news of Teresa's approaching marriage had been sufficiently noised about the fashionable world to be no secret to any individual at the fête; and this was in some measure to be accounted for by the officious industry of the male and female gossips of the place, who have no other means of employing their time but by reciprocating the tittle-tattle of the day: and it might partly be accounted for by the recent celebrity which Sir Charles had acquired in consequence of his increasing intimacy at the Pavilion, and of his conduct towards Lord Baron, which had made him a much more attractive subject of conversation amongst the belles than formerly.

Lady Rattle who, by some means, had contrived to gain an admission to the fête, although she had received no direct invitation, was the first to congratulate Sir Charles and Teresa; for no sooner did she

observe them fixed for the evening, than, seing a vacant seat by the side of Miss Evergreen, her ladyship instantly made the best of her way through the crowd, and, drawing the chair close to Teresa, began, with her usual rapidity, "Well, my dear Miss Evergreen, and so you and the baronet are going to make a match of it – or is it now—eh, you cunning rogue? I should not at all wonder if you have stolen a march upon us all, and got the ceremony performed without the world being a bit the wiser for it! And you, baronet, I declare you are a very monster, for you never come near me: if I had no better acquaintance, I should absolutely die of the blue devils."

Teresa scarcely knew what sort of reply to make to her ladyship's volubility; but Sir Charles presently relieved her from her difficulty, for, leaning over her, he an-

swered Lady Rattle in her own way. "Now 'pon my honour, my lady, you are insufferably severe upon me. I declare I thought I really bored you to death with my company. As to being married, I am not yet so fortunate; but a few hours more I trust will make me so."

"Oh! then it will take place to morrow!" exclaimed her ladyship. "Well I knew it was close at hand. Let me congratulate you, my dearest Teresa, for really I think you uncommonly fortunate to pick up such a handsome gay young man as your baronet. I declare all the young girls of my acquaintance are at this very moment ready to pull caps for him. And pray, Sir Charles, do you mean to spend the honey-moon in town?"

The blush which mantled the virgin cheek of the fair Teresa was suffered to

pass unnoticed, and the reply of Sir Charles was prevented by the commencement of the performance of the concert, which arrested the attention of her volatile ladyship, and completely obliterated from her memory Sir Charles, Teresa, and the dear subject of the marriage The piece which was performed as an overture to the amusements of the evening, was one of Handel's, and it was the fashion, even for the ear which was too unrefined to distinguish the minute beauties of harmony which are so skilfully blended in the works of that master, to admire every production of Handel.

"Well now I protest, that is the grandest thing I ever heard in my life!" exclaimed Lady Rattle, who knew as much of music as her pug dog, and no more: "do you mind, my dear, how beautifully the flats came in to relieve the sharps, and

the naturals to help the flats. What a charming hotch potch of minims and crotchets! Lord! Lord! if I could not sit and hear that flute and the horn, for they are my favorites, till to-morrow."

"You are partial to the flute I see, Lady Rattle?" returned Teresa, who was obliged to speak to prevent herself from bursting out into a fit of laughter at her ladyship's remarks on the overture: "it is a lovely instrument."

"I believe so, my dear," quoth her ladyship: "to hear Nicholson and that other man, the Frenchman, I forget his name—to hear them play, why I always faint away as soon as ever they have left off. But they tell me we are to have a song from the spouse of Lady Charlotte: and I understand he is a great proficient. I dare swear he sings delightfully. Pray, my dear,

did you ever hear Nicholson play the flute?"

"Never, my lady," replied Teresa. "Indeed I believe he had not played in public before I left town. But I have heard so good a report of his fame, as well as of the other, that I have had a great desire to hear him."

"Why, my dear, then I'll tell you all about it," answered her ladyship. "You must know he runs from the very topmost note down to the very lowest, without once stopping to catch a breath: and the highest notes he produces like a bird's whistle, and the lowest like a bassoon. Why you never heard of such a thing in your life. For my part I would not have believed it had I not heard it myself, for it is a downright miracle."

Lady Charlotte sitting down to the piano forte at this instant, and her spouse preparing himself to sing, the conversation was interrupted: for every eye and ear were strained to catch the performance of the two illustrious personages who had condescended so far to throw off the stiffness of dignity as to contribute their own abilities to promote the gratification of the brilliant groupe assembled together to do them honor.

The very first note of the illustrious singer was a signal for a general uplifting of hands, with all the silent eloquence of the most enthusiastic admiration. Lady Rattle, however, willing to draw upon herself some part of that attention which was so completely monopolized in another quarter, or to shew a more refined sensibility to the touching excellence of the vocal musician, took out her little bottle of *eau*

de luce, and laying her head on the shoulder of Teresa, besought her in a whisper to apply the renovating essence to her nostrils, if she found her so overpowered by the bewitching melody of the royal singer, as to go off into a swoon.

Sir Charles had no difficulty in penetrating the thin garb of her ladyship's affected sensibility; but poor Teresa, who was not sufficiently versed in fashionable tactics to suspect her ladyship of any design in her indisposition, with a humanity which always predominated in her feelings and conduct, took the bottle and applied it; for to keep up the appearance of the thing, her ladyship very soon requested its assistance. Poor Teresa's earnestness and solicitude had the effect of drawing a two-fold attention to the spot; and the prince himself, seeing the distress of the fair damsel, ad-

vanced to her, and giving directions to some attendants to convey Lady Rattle into the anti-room, began to re-assure Teresa, and by the affability and generous condescension of his manner, soon succeeded in encouraging the poor girl.

Lady Rattle, however, who had completely succeeded in interrupting the performance, and in transferring the attention of the audience to herself, had accomplished all she intended or wished, and it would have tended to lessen materially the extent of her triumph were she not permitted to witness the emotions caused by her swooning. She accordingly no sooner found that preparations were making to convey her out of the room, than she discovered symptoms of revival, and, in a very few seconds, before she could be moved from the scene of her operations, her ladyship opened her

eyes, sighed deeply, and made the customary enquiry—" Where am I?"

This was of course a mere question of form such as is usual on these occasions, and required no kind of answer. In fact, there was no time for answer, for her ladyship a moment afterwards was so far recovered, as to make use of her tongue with her accustomed volubility.— " Well," said she, " this is prodigiously unfortunate! I declare I have made myself quite a spectacle to all this fashionable company. I am almost mortified to death, Teresa; for I have exposed you as monstrously as I have myself. Oh! heavens, those overpowering sharps and flats were too much for me! Never let me hear the name of Braham again!"

" Had not your ladyship better retire?" asked his royal highness; " for the re-

petition of the melody may chance to produce a repetition of its unpleasant effects upon your ladyship's sensibility."

"It is excessively condescending of your royal highness," answered Lady Rattle, "to feel an interest in my situation. But, my gracious prince, I think I am strong enough to bear the repetition. Good heavens! that I should be the unfortunate cause of interrupting the gratification of so numerous and splendid a company; and that my weakness too should have interrupted their highnesses in that bewitching execution!"

His royal highness was too well bred to press the departure of Lady Rattle, the instant he found it was not agreeable to her inclination. He therefore bowed acquiescence in her wishes, and with a smile of gracious condescension expressed

his hope that her ladyship would be sensible of no further ill effects from the continuance of the performance, and retired to his seat, leaving Teresa in no slight confusion.

Lady Rattle had, in truth, made herself more conspicuous by this circumstance than accorded with the retiring disposition of the modest Teresa; who, but for the presence of Sir Charles, would probably have lapsed in reality into that situation which Lady Rattle had so successfully feigned. Sir Charles, however, contrived to draw her into a conversation, which had the effect of abstracting her thoughts from too minute an attention to the occurrence which had just taken place, and which, with the effects it had produced, had so powerfully affected her feelings. By these means, the baronet soon succeeded in relieving her mind from its

perplexity, and as the vocal entertainment was by this time resumed, and the attention of the company was thus diverted from them, Teresa very soon recovered herself.

Lady Rattle, however, notwithstanding she appeared to pay the closest attention to the performance, was in reality occupied with her own reflections, which were of a description highly self-satisfactory. Her main object was to render herself conspicuous; and without the slightest knowledge of music, as was before mentioned, to convey the impression to those about her, that her whole soul and system were tuned to harmony, and that such was the delicate construction of her feelings as to be shaken almost to annihilation, whenever they were made to vibrate to the skilful touch of perfection.

To keep up this delusion, however, it was absolutely necessary that her ladyship should display consistent symptoms of emotion, as the performance went on. At certain intervals, therefore, she found it necessary to place the services of Teresa in requisition, by incessantly instilling into her ear the apprehensions under which she laboured, lest the wonderful art of the performers should cause a relapse into her former unfortunate situation, and thus expose them both again to the impudent criticisms of the unfeeling, and the generous pity of the sympathizing.

Teresa's enjoyment was thus completely interrupted; for, as she had still no suspicion that Lady Rattle's illness would be feigned, she was so incessantly occupied in applying the *eau de luce*, and in taking

other precautionary measures to prevent a recurrence of her ladyship's indisposition, as to be utterly disabled from devoting herself to the various performances.

Several times the poor girl was more than half-disposed to intreat Sir Charles to take her home, but her humanity always stepped in to check this inclination, unless she could be accompanied by Lady Rattle herself; and her ladyship was so infected with a contrary spirit, that she regularly turned a deaf ear whenever poor Teresa ventured to suggest an idea of this terrible nature.

The singing was at length finished, to the great relief of Teresa, who had calculated upon being allowed to attend to the ballet which was to follow, without any of those sad interruptions which had proved so fatal to the enjoyments of the earlier

part of the evening. But, alas, she was doomed to a new disappointment; for no sooner did the graceful trippers "on the light fantastic toe" commence their gay evolutions than her ladyship was once more in all the raptures of the wildest enthusiasm. Positively all her bliss on earth was reserved for this single evening and concentrated herein! Her hand and fingers and even her toes were as actually in motion, as all the limbs of the dancers; and in suppressing her powerful inclination to hum the tune audibly, she produced an ideal convulsion in the throat which had well nigh stopped her breath and agitation together.

None could help noticing the vagaries of Lady Rattle's behaviour; some whispered to others that she must certainly have lost her wits; while one or two, possessed of more discrimination than the

rest, attributed her conduct to its right cause, and pronounced it altogether a piece of affectation. Amongst this number was Sir Charles; who, while thoroughly disgusted at a conduct which had drawn all eyes upon their little party, at length took an opportunity to whisper to Teresa, "Absolutely, my dear girl, we must take an opportunity to give Lady Rattle the slip, unless she can correct her behaviour: for she has now made us the subject of a universal stare from every part of the room."

"I perceive it," answered Teresa. "But what can we do? It will be the height of ill-breeding to leave her to herself, and my mother has not been with us the whole of the evening, or we might have committed her ladyship to her care."

Lady Evergreen, indeed, at her en-

trance had taken her seat close by an old dowager with whom she wished to discuss some of the news of the day, previous to the commencement of the concert; and, having a great antipathy to Lady Rattle, the same moment she saw her ladyship take her seat by the side of Teresa, Lady Evergreen resolved to keep her own sitting until the end of the performance, and to leave the two to the uninterrupted enjoyment of each other's society.

Sir Charles for some moments puzzled his brain to hit upon some scheme by which he might rid himself and Teresa of their torment, but for some time the endeavour was fruitless, until at last his eye accidentally caught Tunbelly's, who was at that instant entering the room; and who, seeing the baronet, immediately crossed over to him, but had scarcely

shaken him by the hand before the other accosted him. "My dear General, you are arrived just at the critical time to do me an essential service. Lady Rattle has harassed Teresa and myself the whole evening! You have no one with you, and, being free from engagement, will you oblige me so far as to take her tormenting ladyship off our hands?"

"To be sure will I, my dear Baronet," answered Tunbelly, in a whisper. 'Leave the old dowager to me, and for sure I'll prevent her from troubling you for the remainder of the night." Then, seating himself on the chair which Teresa quitted under pretence of speaking to her mother, the General instantly assailed the ear of Lady Rattle. -"My dear Lady Rattle, it is absolutely an age since I saw you! I never saw you look so handsome as you do to night, upon my conscience!

Nay, I'll be bound for it, you have some design upon the beaux to night, for faith you eclipse most of the belles. But have you heard of the new publication by Lady Caroline Eves? Oh, it is the finest thing!"

"You amaze me, General," replied Lady Rattle, who was delighted to the soul at the idea of picking up a little addition to her stock of news. "But what is it about, my dear General? Is it a bit of scandal? If so, I shall be distracted until I have got sight it. Well, now, General, it is a most astonishing thing that I should never once have heard of this; and yet I have been at Lady Babblewell's every evening this week! But come, tell me all about it!"

Now it so happened, Tunbelly himself knew nothing beyond what he had

just asserted. He had accidentally heard that Lady Caroline had written and published a novel, which contained a vast deal of scandal, and he had heard the name of the production. But as to any further particulars, he was totally disqualified from entering into them; and he had merely dropped the idea of the thing with a view to rivet the intention of lady Rattle while Sir Charles retreated.

It was necessary, however, that the General should make some reply; and, accordingly, having imposed a heavy tax on his imagination to provide for the spur of the moment, he made up a story from his slight stock of invention, which, although too silly to have deceived a person of common sagacity, easily duped her ladyship, who was so agitated with delight at the budget she had gained, that it was not without considerable difficulty that she

could prevail upon herself to sit half an hour longer; but, being fearful lest her dear friend Lady Babblewell should be gone to bed before she could carry the news to her, she at length, forgetful of the usual form of etiquette, rose from her seat, and with a profound curtsey withdrew.

Tunbelly, having performed this essential service to his friend, immediately repaired to Sir Charles, who, from his new seat behind Lady Evergreen, had watched the manœuvres of the General, and was almost ready to burst into gusts of complete horse-laugh when he saw the air with which her ladyship rose from her seat and left the company, for her very look and manner convinced him that the General to get rid of her had been putting some trick upon her.

When the General explained the circumstances, the amusement of the baronet, Teresa, and Lady Evergreen, who had been informed of the whole affair, was not a little increased: her ladyship, in particular, declaring that no one thing on earth could ever give her such sincere pleasure, as to see such an old incorrigible gossip for once made completely the dupe of her love of slander and her insatiable appetite after every thing in the shape of news

The departure of Lady Rattle at once removed every obstacle to the enjoyment of Teresa and her lover: who immediately began to enter into the spirit of the amusements which succeeded. The company stood up to pair in the merry dance, and the lovely Teresa, by the graceful agility of her movements, their diversified skill, and the modesty of her behaviour

no little admiration amongst the beaux, and no slight envy among the belles.

Day had almost surmounted the dark edge of the night when the various groupes began to retire to their homes, not a little delighted with the condescension and urbanity which they had experienced from their royal host and his illustrious relatives; and, although some of the gay females were mortified at the fancied slights which had been offered to them, images of pleasure were the predominating pictures of the gratified recollection.

Sir Charles handed Lady Evergreen and Teresa to their carriage, and placed himself by the side of his spouse elect, when a sudden crash amongst the carriages behind, followed by a concussion of their own, which for a moment menaced it with annihilation, caused the ladies to

utter a piercing shriek, and made Sir Charles himself feel no considerable apprehensions for their safety. It was in vain, however, that he put his head out of the window, and inquired what was the cause of the disturbance, for some time; until at length one of Lady Evergreen's servants approached, and, opening the door, requested the party to alight, for the carriage was too much injured to proceed.

This was a most unfortunate circumstance, for the man had been delayed so long, by the press of carriages, from ascertaining the nature and extent of the injury done to the vehicle, that, by the time he had discovered the impossibility of proceeding with the vehicle, the whole of the other coaches had drawn away, and they were left without any one near them to offer them any of that assistance of which they now stood so much in need.

In this dilemma, there were but two courses to pursue, either to get the loan of a carriage from the Pavilion, or to content themselves with trudging home on foot; and, although at the first moment the party were inclined to prefer the latter mode, the reflection which immediately suggested itself, of the insufficiency of ball dresses to keep off the inclemency of a wintry asmosphere, convinced them that this was the best alternative which ought to be adopted.

Sir Charles accordingly, summoning up all his courage, left the ladies in the carriag and re-entered the Pavilion, where it was his good fortune to meet the General, who instantly represented the circumstances to his royal highness when the prince, with that consistency of condescension, in which he had rendered himself so estimable in his behaviour through the

whole of the evening, gave directions to furnish a carriage of his own for the use of the party.

This circumstance gave Lady Evergreen a new ground on which to launch out in favor of the prince. She declared she had never known half his good qualities, until she had obtained the opportunity of a closer acquaintance with his royal highness; and she expressed her firm opinion that even those persons who had been accustomed to rail most severely against his royal highness, had they the privilege of seeing him in person, and of observing the amiable bias of his mind and conduct, would be ready to retract their slanders, and to crown his royal highness with that meed of praise which they would then discover to be most justly his due.

Sir Charles and Teresa implicitly subscribed this doctrine; for they had both been treated with a degree of distinction which could not fail to produce in minds, not entirely locked up against every generous feeling and sentiment, sensations of a very lively gratitude. Teresa, in fact, who, like the rest of her sex, blended amongst her perfections a little of feminine weakness, was not a little elevated in her own opinion of herself, as well as in the prospect of a union with the baronet, whose interest at the Pavilion had produced the wonderful effects which she had that morning experienced, and snatched her at once from a state of comparative obscurity, to place her higher on the roll of distinction than hundreds who had been, year after year, dancing attendance at court, and, basking like butterflies in summer, in the cheering sun beams of royal patronage.

Sir Charles was equally delighted that he had been enabled to come off with such *éclat* in the occurrences of the evening; and thus the whole trio, in a state of absolute extacy at what had taken place, reached the residence of Lady Evergreen with very little conversation, although the amorous baronet had no suffered the opportunity to pass away without availing himself of the privilege which he derived from the situation in which he stood with regard to Teresa, to take a few of those liberties which love prompted, and which an equal affection on the part of the fair damsel prevented her from offering to resent or obstruct.

CHAPTER XX.

That the novel draws near to a conclusion is shewn by the marriage of some of the parties.—Tunbelly appears in a new character.—A little further acquaintance with Stewart, one of the prince's courtiers.—Some account of cunning George, another of the same class.—A dispute between the Prince and his advisers on the subject of a speech, which plainly shews that the prince begins to think for himself, and, thinking for himself, to think correctly.—The prince quits Brighton, and, of course, the novel concludes.

THE happy morning at length arrived, which was to make Sir Charles the happiest o. human beings. Tunbelly had agreed, at the especial desire of Lady Evergreen, to bestow the fair hand of Te-

resa, and he had accordingly bestirred himself three or four hours before his usual time, being at the residence of Sir Charles by half-past seven o'clock, ready to accompany him to take an early breakfast at Lady Evergreen's before the performance of the ceremony, which was to take place at the parish-church.

It may appear strange to most readers, and particularly monstrous to fashionable feelings, that this matter of marriage was not performed at her ladyship's own house, by virtue of a special licence: but Lady Evergreen was a friend of old customs, and, in an argument which she had held with Teresa a few evenings before on this very subject, her ladyship had declared, that she abhorred all those vile incroachments upon old habits, and that, for her part, she considered no marriage binding which was not performed between the ca-

nonical hours of eight and twelve, and by the proper clergyman at the parish-church Teresa, for some time, opposed her mother's prejudices; for she wished to avoid any exposure of herself to the public view, but, finding she could not conquer them, she subdued her own feelings, and assented to the proposition.

Sir Charles, on the preceding evening, had taken leave of the prince, since it was the intention of the new-married couple, instantly after the ceremony, to set off for town, and to remain at the town-house of the baronet for the remainder of the winter. At this parting visit, Sir Charles received new proofs of the flattering kindness of his royal master, who honoured him with a general invitation to the palace, when he himself should leave Brighton for the gayer scenes of the metropolis, an invitation of which the ba-

ronet determined to avail himself as much as possible.

At half-past eight o'clock, Sir Charles led the blushing Teresa to the altar, and the vow was reciprocated which ensured to each the possession of the other. Lady Evergreen, and a young lady who had accompanied Teresa in the capacity of lady's-maid, stepped into Sir Charles's travelling coach to go with the bride and his groom to the metropolis ; but the General, being compelled to attend to his duties at the Pavilion, was obliged to take leave of the party at the door of the church, after wishing them all the happiness imaginable, and then returned to attend his royal master.

The time indeed approached when public business would require the presence of his royal highness himself in the metropo-

lis; for the day was rapidly hastening when the parliament would meet, and business of the utmost importance was expected to come under inconsiderate discussion. Every dispatch which the prince received betrayed the secret apprehensions of his advisers, notwithstanding they exerted themselves to the utmost to conceal the fears of which they were ashamed to owe their existence.

"I see no cause for dejection, my prince," would Tunbelly say, when he saw his royal highness suffering under the influence of a momentary despondency.—"You have a strong military force, sufficient to keep the whole country in awe; and, vigilant as your royal highness's advisers appear to be, they will not fail to suppress, in their very commencement, any indications of a spirit which may tend to put your royal highness's person or

government in peril. I pray you, sir, not to be cast down by trifles."

The prince, however, had begun to entertain different views of the relative duties of prince and people, to those which the error of a moment had formerly imposed upon his mind. He had long and deeply felt for the distresses of the country, and had marked, with feelings of displeasure, the apathy to those distresses which many about him displayed. He had also, as before stated, determined on a measure which would give the people a proof that he was not so callous to their situation as his enemies had represented him; but that, in spite of all the detractions which malevolence had forged against his character and his motives, that he was, at heart, that true friend to his country which he had in earlier life proved himself, and was not unworthy to reign

in the hearts as well as in the interests of an independent nation.

His royal highness had still some of his advisers round him. Stewart, in particular, had quitted the bustle and amusements of the town, and, in a state of comparative retirement, yet immediately within call if his master required him, was employing himself in framing a new catalogue of original or compounded words and phrases, with which to astonish his hearers, when the hour should presently arrive for him to make display of his rhetorical powers before an assembly which composed most of the first talent in the country.

Stewart was a man very different from the general classes of society. His ambition was insatiable and indefinite: it was not only a thirst of favor, but also of a

character for talent. Yet he had more than common difficulties to encounter in his progress; for nature seemed rather to have designed him to figure away as a fop than a sage, as his education had, somehow or other, taken an unfortunate bias, and entered into an alliance with nature to give him the complete finish for the character of that most worthless of human beings—a *blood!* Fortune, however, in a capricious mind, having thrown him into that sphere where he was lifted up to fill parts of distinction, instead of to lounge up and down Bond-street, he became one of the principal advisers of the prince, and a wonderful orator in parliament; for he could give you a speech of any length, to suit his convenience: he could soar into the clouds, or dive into the abysses of language; could give you tropes and metaphors beyond number; could coin new words or ex-

pressions, or lengthen out old ones; could make use of continual repetitions without subjecting them to be called vain, because they gave time for his friends to assemble for the support of his measures. He had also a becoming negligence of manner, which stamped him for a self-confident, if not for a graceful speaker; for he would talk you for whole hours without once extricating his hands from the pockets of his Cossack trowsers, or shewing any kind of vicissitude of action, save when he was angry, and then he could upon occasion "saw the air" with the self-same hands, and "mouth" his speeches like a player.

This courtly mender of language amused himself for whole days in rehearsing set speeches before his glass, not that he might acquire the most graceful modes of delivering them, but that

he should attain to the most perfect modes of ease and self possession; that his arrogance of action or appearance might daunt and discomfit his antagonists where they had the advantage in grace and in argument; for it was of very inferior consequence to him by what means he obtained his triumphs, so that it could not be doubted he did gain them.

It was to the constant and mischievous advice of this courtier that great numbers of the people attributed those measures which his royal highness had been led to adopt, and which had excited those discontents that had been spreading through the country of late; so that in fact, his conduct had been severely canvassed with an asperity and a freedom of discussion whieh had scarcely ever been known before. And at this

very moment his head was filled with plots and plans, the main object of all which was, the establishment of his own power and consequence upon a still more firm and invulnerable basis, and perhaps at the same time tend to the gradual reduction of the high tone which the public had the hardihood to assume on subjects of general policy, and ultimately to undermine their natural rights and liberties.

If these were not his real intentions, they were at least such as were imputed to him; and his general conduct had too palpable a tendency to justify the imputation, for he called the prayers of the people "clamour," and designated the whole of the nation who dared to impeach his motives "a rabble" Whenever he desired to carry a project, he scorned so base a mode as attempting it by concilia-

tory means, and was always the advocate of the measures of violence, which are the more legitimate policy of a despotic monarch than of a free and defined constitution.

There was also another courtier who was at Brighton at this time, dancing attendance upon the prince, with a view to his own promotion in the state. This man was known by the name of Cunning George; he could out talk Stewart, for he had read Lempriere's Classical Dictionary, and Plutarch, Gibbon, and a few other choice books, and could talk about Roman Emperors, and the heathen gods, and so forth, with a fluency which sometimes called even a blush upon Stewart's cheek, because he could not match him in making up the ingredients of a speech.

Cunning George and Stewart in former

times had had a great difference of opinion, and went out into the field for the express purpose of shooting at each other; but what the pistols were loaded with never appeared, although George kept his room for some time to save appearances. Men in such high situations, however, never suffer their passionate feelings of anger to interfere with their personal interests; particularly in this terrible quarrel, the two combatants very soon agreed to sink both the dispute and the effects which it had produced; and to stretch out the hand of amity to each other, and support each other's measures, in defiance of the wishes, the interests, and the voice of the whole country combined; and after this compact the courtiers were sworn and inseparable friends.

Now George was equal in arrogance to his companion, and more than a match

for him in eloquence; but as, like two horses in a pair of shafts, they always pulled together, this circumstance was of very little consequence. The public, however, who was not mainly pleased with this most unnatural union, beheld it with a good deal of jealousy, and rumour was pretty bold either in creating motives for them, or in publishing to the world those by which they were really actuated.

The season of gaiety and sport being now brought to a termination, by the near approach of the day when his royal highness had determined to depart for town, in order to devote himself to public business, it became necessary to adopt those arrangements which this change of circumstances called so loudly for. Stewart and Cunning George accordingly waited on the prince to concert measures with him, to prepare a speech with which his

royal highness, according to custom, might meet his senators.

It had been usual for the speeches delivered on these occasions, to be couched more in the language of congratulation than complaint, it ever having been considered most adviseable to put the best face on things, lest the people, by hearing of fears at the fountain head, might, indeed, be led to suspect that their situation was in truth much more desperate than truth would disclose: and the two courtiers suggested to his royal highness that it would be adviseable not to depart from the usual routine of words on this occasion.

"What!" cried the prince, "would you have me launch into the language of congratulation, at the very moment when hundreds of thousands are reduced to the

very lowest extremity of suffering by the unprecedented distresses of the times? At this crisis, when I need all the wisdom of my parliament to enable me to weather the storms of adversity, would you have me to dissemble the real state of things; and go to those who must aid me to conquer my difficulties with a false statement of circumstances, which their own convictions must detect, and their understandings, let their tongues say what they will must utterly condemn? No, Gentlemen, said the prince, I cannot lend myself to such a delusion. The speech for me to deliver on this occasion must be a little chequered with complaint, or we shall injure ourselves!"

Cunning George replied,—"My gracious prince, when the Emperors of Rome trembled at their situations, they preserved an aspect of confidence which

concealed their fears from others, and thus sometimes prevented those results which a communication of their fears would have produced. We are not surrounded by clouds which are eternal; all around us is not so completely subdued to the power of darkness and despair, but that the silver pinions of hope waved over the scene will presently emancipate it, and substitute in its room a glowing paradise of prosperity. Danger is but a blusterer, meet it and defeat it, defy it; and it will trun and will fly from you. Pray, your royal highness, dwell on all the hopes and resources of the country, but never let a whisper of its difficulties escape you."

After waiting a moment to discover if the prince made any reply to this speech, and seeing him apparently lost in the profundity of his own meditations, Stewart, full of confidence, commenced his attack

in support of his friend George. "My friend, gracious sir," quoth he, "is a sage adviser, and counsels your royal highness most excellently: and might I venture to say a word or two after he has culled all the beauties of language, I would recommend you, sir, to dwell with all your *lustrosity* on what may be expected, if the country will have patience to wait for the turn in the tide of affairs, and that confidence in your royal highness and ourselves, which, without vanity, I think we so much merit at their hands. Did we not, an't please your royal highness, bring them with honor out of an obstinate war?"

"We did so, Stewart, but who plunged them into it?" was the reply of the prince; and no answer being returned by either of the courtiers, who both stood indeed as if utterly confounded by the simple

question, his royal highness presently continued—"We must not take much merit to ourselves on this score! However, that is neither here nor there: the question with us now is—in what sort of language I shall address my senate; and unless I hear better reasons than you have yet advanced, I cannot consent to use these terms, which will bear a construction just the reverse of that which they bear in their natural sense. Is the policy of a government to be continually a deceitful policy? Must we never speak nor act with honest candour towards the people from whom we derive our power?"

"The people from whom we derive our power! Heaven have mercy upon his royal highness's reason!" Thus silently echoed both Stewart and Cunning George, who were both struck with horror to hear a doctrine from his royal

highness which, although strictly consistent with the spirit of that constitution which his royal highness was bound to protect, they had flattered themselves that they had totally eradicated from his heart. Cunning George, however, after some minutes found his tongue, although he was too practised a courtier to suffer it to give expression to the true sentiments which occupied his mind —"If it please your royal highness," quoth George, "I would humbly suggest that the great mass of the people, being nothing better than mere ragamuffins in mind as well as in conduct, are perfectly incompetent to enter into those sound reasons which influence your royal highness's exalted and enlightened mind: and therefore, as their ignorance would lead them to form wrong conclusions, it appears to me that it is most wise not to be too candid nor communicative to them."

'And that is just my opinion, my gracious master," cried Stewart, who always came in to play second fiddle (according to the musical phrase) to Cunning George, "and therefore, with all humble submission to your royal highness's opiion, I presume to think that a little politic reserve upon the subject of our distresses would be very admissible. For instance, your royal highness, if we point out to the people all the dangers by which they are surrounded, they have sufficient sagacity to understand enough of them to set them in a state of terrible alarm, and to make them grumble, and petition and worry us to death to provide remedies. On the other hand, attempt to shew them the intricate science of finance, in order to explain to them how the perils of the times are to be met and overcome, and you presently take them out of their depth, and they understand you

no more than you would a lecture in high Dutch or Chaldaic. So that I humbly think it may be better if your royal highness did not illuminate them in opposition to their own interests."

The prince considered some minutes before he ventured to make any kind of reply to this advice of the two courtiers. At length, however, he contented himself with briefly informing them that he would resolve by the following day, and would then give them his determination, and as his royal highness then signified his wish to be left alone, the two courtiers, although extremely reluctant to give up the point, were compelled to relinquish their attack for the present, and to take their leave of his royal highness, and depart without gaining their end.

As they bent their way from the Pavi-

lion, however, Cunning George could not refrain from an expression of disappointment to his companion—" How is this, Stewart!" quoth he—" I fear we have left his royal highness too much to his own reflections, and we may be well assured, when that is the case, that matters will go against us. We must not suffer these new and dangerous sentiments to take root, or they may by and bye become destructive of our interests. No, no, my friend; this is a point in which we must be determined and united?"

" I am absolutely frightened to death," exclaimed Stewart—" for I had not the slightest expectation of any thing in the shape of opposition to our advice Heaven and earth! does his royal highness intend to set up thinking for himself? Monstrous absurdity! but we must never allow him to carry this disposition into

practice. We may just as well give up our high offices at once to those who have been for so many years vainly barking for them, as be reduced to the degrading situation of mere instruments in the hands of the prince! Such a concession would be a breach of the constitution, and attended with more dangerous consequences than any other of the breaches of which we have lately heard so much; for we could then have no restraint upon the prince, let his projects be what they would."

"You are right, Stewart—perfectly right," answered George—"and since the thing is of so much importance to be immediately and fully discussed, let us instantly away to Jenkinson, and have a special meeting on the subject, that we may be resolved how to act to morrow, since hi royal highness has sent us off until then." The proposition was agreed

to without hesitation, and in a few minutes, this pair of courtiers had reached the residence of Jenkinson, and being well known, were admitted at once, and opened their errand to him,

"It is a serious business," quoth Jenkinson, "but his royal highness is pretty resolute when he had set his mind upon any point: and we must preserve our places at any risk. I do not speak for myself; for you know, as far as I am concerned, I have very lately expressed repeated wishes to retire from the cares of office. I am growing old, and would fain repose for the remainder of my life. But I speak as for you. I know your fondness for place! I am aware that you always preferred the solid comforts of office to the empty honour of a character for consistency. Now, if his royal highness be resolute to have his way, you must

consent either to give up your places or your opinions. There is no other alternative, so of these two evils choose which is the least."

"As to that," quoth Cunning George, "it is no very difficult matter to decide which is the greater evil and which is the less? It is not so puzzling as the enigma of the Sphynx which Œdippus unravelled; and if it must come to that point, that we must surrender either our opinion or our places, it appears to me that we shall all agree to do as we have often-done before. But perhaps a little dispassionate argument may work upon his royal highness to renounce his opinion."

"He has, doubtless, argued the matter with himself," said Jenkinson, "and having decided upon the conduct he intends to pursue, you must have a better

opinion of your own parts than I have of them, if you think you can bring him to alter his views of the matter. If you like to try, there can be no objection to the attempt; but beware not to go too far, lest you provoke his royal highness, and thus run the risk of getting yourself and your colleagues dismissed from your places whether you would or no."

"Aye, aye, beware of that, my dear friend," cried Stewart;—"for that would be the most serious catastrophe which could befal us. If our adversaries were once to get into our places, I should not a bit wonder if they were absolutely to impeach us, and positively to hang us up like so many sheep-stealers, or cut off our heads, like so many traitors! No, no: lest such an evil should come of it, my dear George, I think, indeed, you had better, much better, give up the

idea, and never think another syllable about it."

George, who was very vain of his own eloquence, was very loth to give up the point; for he flattered himself most confidently that he should be able to work a complete revolution in the sentiments of his royal highness. But the suggestion of Jenkinson and the fears of Stewart staggered him completely; for should he, by any misplaced word in the heat of his argument, offend the delicate ears of his master, and thus bring about the consummation so much wished for, he might not only have to bear the sneers and reproaches of all those whose ambitious views he had overthrown by this one hasty act, but perchance might have once more to face a pistol-bullet, and, instead of fighting one solitary individual, might be compelled to fight one after another, till

he had run the gauntlet through the whole of the cabinet.

This last idea decided him in an instant; for although George was always eager for contention where words were the only missiles, he had a mortal antipathy to fighting duels, which so frequently terminated in death. Rather than run into any more of these encounters (for he had been caught in the toils once, and very narrowly escaped with his life) he resolved to abandon the idea of pouring forth that torrent of eloquence on which he so sanguinely calculated to reform the opinions of his illustrious master.

" I yield," quoth George, " I give up my scheme; for I agree with you in opinion, that there is danger in it; it being possible that a hasty word might get us all turned adrift, and such an issue would

be almost as dreadful to me as death itself. Well, then, you are of opinion, Jenkinson, (for it is on your suggestion that we have determined to act) you are of opinion that nothing can be done but to wait the determination of our master, and whatever way it may tend, to accede to it without the slightest opposition."

"Yes, yes, George, that is Jenkinson's opinion," eagerly exclaimed Stewart, scarcely giving time for George to finish his question, but Jenkinson might be pert in his reply, and give an answer contrary to his wishes. "That is the opinion of Jenkinson, it is clear enough; and it is my opinion most completely; and it is the opinion of every one of us, as you may well believe; for there is not an individual amongst us who would not part with all his opinions, rather than run the

terrible risk of having his place taken from him?"

Jenkinson, by an inclination of his head, intimated his acquiescence, but informed his colleagues that he would meet them at the Pavilion on the next morning, and if there appeared a possibility of doing any good, he would tip the wink to George for him to make the attack, and this was a source of hope to George, who determined to go home and study a very touching speech for the occasion; and most sincerely did he supplicate Heaven that it might not be studied in vain, but that he might be allowed to try its effect.

At the appointed time, Stewart and George made the best of their way to the Pavilion, the former praying that he might find his royal highness changed in

his sentiments, and ready to adopt the sort of language which they had proposed to him; and the latter with equal ardour hoping that there would be occasion for him to deliver his harangue, which it had taken him great part of the night, and most tedious puzzling his brain and turning over his library, to compose and correct ready for delivery.

Jenkinson was there before his companions, and unfortunately for the hopes of George, had ascertained that the prince was resolved to adhere to his opinion of the preceding day; and this determination he conveyed to his friends immediately after their entrance. It would avail nothing, however, that George should shew his discontent; he, therefore, made up his mind to submit with as good a grace as he could, and to alter or expand his speech, for the purpose some

day of astonishing and entrapping the applause of parliament.

It was determined at this meeting, in conformity with the wish of his royal highness, that his speech should contain an allusion to the distresses of the times, and an expression of the sorrow which his royal highness felt on this account, with a similar expression of his determination to contribute by every means in his power to alleviate the gloomy pressure of circumstances. Neither of the courtiers could at all fathom this pledge, nor dared they put a single question to his royal highness respecting it ; as he seemed to be, at this moment, in a disposition of mind, which was not very favourable to the expectation that they might receive such an answer as would be agreeable to them.

What this pledge meant was a question which the three courtiers reciprocated to each other as they left the Pavilion; and a thousand conjectures was formed on the subject, all of them sufficiently remote from the truth, as it never entered into their brains to imagine that his royal highness would consent to relinquish any part of his income to relieve the public distresses; that being a line of conduct so opposite to any they would either have adopted or recommended. Stewart was fearful his royal highness intended to dock their pay, and Cunning George was not without a similar apprehension; and both of them vowed that what they got for the devotion of all their time and talents to the services of the public, was, even at the present, very inadequate to their merit; and what would it be if any new abridgement were to be made? After they had

perplexed themselves on the subject until they had reached their homes, they resolved that, let what would be proposed, so it did not affect their continuance in office, they cared not; for, while in favor, they had always the opportunity of amply making up for any nominal deficiency in their incomes.

Two days afterwards, the prince gave orders for his departure without further delay, as the moment was at hand when his presence would be required in town; and accordingly, on the morning after he had expressed his determination, he bade adieu to Brighton, and in the course of a few days was followed by the whole of the fashionables whom his presence had attracted thither, and who, the instant he had left the place, had no kind of inducement to spend another hour in such a monstrous hole; so that,

in the course of a single week, the town, from being the crowded receptacle of the gay and dissipated of every circle, became the most deserted, forlorn, dull place in the world; where a person of real taste and fashion could not endure to remain above a single day.



Conclusion.

It was a very short time after the return of the prince to town, that a traitorous attack was made upon his life by a set of unprincipled ruffians: yet, this attack which, through the kindness of Providence, was defeated, had no effect in altering the resolution he had formed to make a generous sacrifice to lessen the distresses of the public; for his royal highness embraced the very first favourable opportunity to convey to the public

his determination to give up no less than one-fifth of the income appropriated to his household expences by a vote of parliament, an example which not only invited the adoption of other. but, on every unprejudiced and loyal mind, produced the firm conviction that his royal highness had the good of the country at heart; and, in spite of every assertion which had been made to the contrary, and corroborated by the unwise policy of ministers, possessed at least that paternal principle, on the future exercise of which the nation might reasonably calculate, in all periods of general distress, and which must give him a claim to the gratitude of every thinking individual.

FINIS.

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